Library of the
University of North Carolina

En

THE LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA

ENDOWED BY THE
DIALECTIC AND PHILANTHROPIC
SOCIETIES

793
N45m

This BOOK may be kept out *TWO WEEKS ONLY,* and is subject to a fine of FIVE CENTS a day thereafter. It was taken out on the day indicated below:

JUL 23 1927
OCT 20 1927
FEB 9 1928
APR 20 1928
NOV 8 1928
FEB 14 1929
MAY 2 1929
JUN 05 2013

THE MAGIC WHISTLE

AND OTHER FAIRY TALE PLAYS

SIX SONGS

FROM

THE MAGIC WHISTLE, AND OTHER FAIRY TALE PLAYS.

MUSIC COMPOSED BY

A. E. WILSHIRE, F.R.C.O.

1. Song of the Hares - (The Magic Whistle).
2. Song of the Moles - (The Mole King's Daughter).
3. Song of the Elves - (Rumpelstiltskin).
4. Fairies' Song - - (Beauty and the Beast).
5. Washing Song - - (Beauty and the Beast).
6. Song of the Geese - (The Goose Girl).

LONDON:

F. PITMAN, HART & CO., Ltd.,

20 & 21 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

Price of Each Song - - - Sixpence net.

The other Songs in these Plays are set to well-known Tunes.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

https://archive.org/details/magicwhistleothe00nesb

"BEAUTY AND THE BEAST."
FAIRIES.

THE MAGIC WHISTLE

AND OTHER FAIRY TALE PLAYS

BY

FRANK NESBITT

WITH SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK AND BOMBAY
1906

THE ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY PRESS LIMITED

TO

DOROTHY MARSHALL

93822

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE MAGIC WHISTLE; OR, HOW JESPER HERDED THE HARES	1
THE MOLE KING'S DAUGHTER	29
RUMPELSTILTSKIN	57
THE GOLDEN GOOSE; OR, HOW JACK MADE THE PRINCESS LAUGH	81
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	101
THE GOOSE GIRL	125

Each Play to be had separately, price Sixpence net.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FAIRIES (Beauty and the Beast) - - - - *Frontispiece*

THREE GOOD HARES (The Magic Whistle)
GEESE (The Goose Girl) - *To face page* 3

FLOWER GIRLS (The Mole King's Daughter)
THREE MERRY MOLES (The Mole King's Daughter) „ „ 31

THE GOLDEN GOOSE, Sc. II. (The Golden Goose)
THE PROCLAMATION (The Golden Goose) - „ „ 83

THE MAGIC WHISTLE

CHARACTERS.

THE KING.
JESPER. (*A Fisherman's Son.*)
JOHN ALLTRADES.
THE QUEEN.
ROSABEL. (*The Princess.*)
DAME MARGERY. (*The Princess's Nurse.*)
THE FAIRY GODMOTHER.
Twelve Good Hares.

SCENE I: *A Wood.* SCENE II: *The Palace Garden.*
SCENE III: *A Meadow.* SCENE IV: *A Room in the Palace.*

"THE MAGIC WHISTLE."
THREE GOOD HARES.

"THE GOOSE GIRL."
GEESE.

SCENE I.

A woodland road. A tree trunk lying R. of stage.

Jesper (entering L. with basket of pearls, and his lunch in red handkerchief). Ah, this is just the place for me to have my lunch, and I'm ready for it too after such a long walk. I wonder what mother's put in for me? (Sits down on tree trunk, and unties handkerchief.) Ah, sandwiches, that's good! Buns, too, and lemonade. I don't believe they've anything better at the palace. Well, I am hungry; it won't take me long to finish up this little lot.

Fairy Godmother (entering R.). Good-morning, young man. And what might you be doing this fine morning?

Jesper. Just having my lunch, mother; and a capital lunch it is, too. Will you have anything?

Fairy Godmother. Well, since you are so kind, I think I will. (She sits down by his side, and he gives her a sandwich.) Thank you. And what might you have in your basket?

Jesper. Pearls, mother. Would you like to see them?

Fairy Godmother. Yes, that I should. (He uncovers basket, and shows the pearls.) Oh, what beauties! Where did you get them?

Jesper. Well, you see my father's a fisherman, and the other day he brought home three dozen oysters. When

he opened them what should he find but a beautiful pearl in each. These are some of them.

Fairy Godmother. They are lovely. What are you going to do with them? Are you going to sell them?

Jesper. Oh, no. You've heard about the Princess, haven't you?

Fairy Godmother. Yes, I've heard that the King wants to get a husband for her.

Jesper. And you've heard too, I expect, that whoever wishes to marry her must bring twelve beautiful pearls, and then do some task which the King will find for him.

Fairy Godmother. Yes, I've heard that too.

Jesper. Well, my father thought that as he'd found these pearls we might just as well have a try, so he divided them among my two brothers and myself.

Fairy Godmother. I see. Have your brothers tried yet?

Jesper. Yes, they've both been to the palace, but they had no luck, and so they came home again.

Fairy Godmother. Oh, how was that?

Jesper. I don't know. They didn't say much when they came home, and they were quite cross when we asked them any questions. But you've got nothing to eat. Have another sandwich, won't you?

Fairy Godmother. No, thank you; I'll have one of those buns, if I may.

Jesper. Yes, do. (He gives her a bun.) And have some lemonade.

Fairy Godmother (taking a glass of lemonade). Thank you. Here's good luck to you! Did your brothers bring the pearls back?

Jesper. No, that's the funny part of it. I can't make it out at all.

Fairy Godmother. Can't you? I can.

Jesper. You! Why, what can you know about it?

Fairy Godmother. Oh, I know more than you think. I suppose they didn't say that they met me on the way, did they?

Jesper. No.

Fairy Godmother. And they didn't say that they were rude to the old woman, did they?

Jesper. No.

Fairy Godmother. I thought not. And so now you are going to have a try, are you?

Jesper. Yes, mother; but I'm afraid I haven't much chance, for my brothers are a lot cleverer than I am. Still there's no harm in trying, and then, you know, "Faint heart never won fair lady".

Fairy Godmother. That's right. And now I'll tell you why your brothers failed. They met me just as you did, and when I asked them what they'd got in their baskets, they tossed up their heads, and said, "Cinders, old woman, cinders". "Very well then," says I, "cinders let them be." On they went, mighty pleased with themselves for having snubbed an inquisitive old woman; but when they got to the palace what do you think happened?

Jesper. I'm sure I don't know.

Fairy Godmother. Well, they opened their baskets, and as the King and Queen were looking into them, the pearls grew black and shrivelled up into cinders before their eyes.

Jesper (starting up). What! Why, you must be a witch.

Fairy Godmother. Oh, dear no! Sit down, sit down; don't mind me. I'll have a drop more of that lemonade, please. (He gives her some.) Ah, thank you. So now you can understand that they were very glad to get home again, and that they didn't want to be asked too many questions. Well, young man, I like you, and as you've been kind to the old woman she'll give you a present. Here, take this whistle. (Gives him the magic whistle.) Don't lose it whatever you do.

Jesper. Thank you, mother; I'm sure you're very kind. But I don't see what good it will be to me.

Fairy Godmother. Perhaps you don't, but I do. Well, if you ever lose anything, or want anything back that has been taken from you, just blow this whistle, and you will see what you will see. (Rising.) Well, I must be off. Good-bye, and good luck to you.

Jesper. Thank you. Good-bye, mother. (She goes off L.) Well, she *is* a funny old lady. And this whistle is almost as funny as she is. Let's see, what am I to do? If I lose anything I may whistle for it. Yes, I've done that before, but it wasn't much good. I lost half a crown the other day. I'll whistle for that, and see what happens. (He blows the whistle, and the half-crown falls at his feet. Jesper picks it up, very much surprised.) Hullo! Why, the old lady must have been a fairy after all. Anyhow the half-crown's a good one, and so is the whistle. I must take care of it. Well, I must be off now, or I shall never get to the palace. (Ties up his handkerchief again, and goes off R.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

Part of the Palace Garden. A garden seat on R. of stage.

John Alltrades (discovered tying up a bunch of roses which he has just gathered). There! That'll be a nice bunch for the Princess, bless her dear young heart! I hope she'll get a good husband, that I do, for I'm sure she deserves one. But they've been a mighty poor lot so far for all their pearls. Why, here comes Dame Margery. Ah, if we were only a bit younger, I wouldn't be a bachelor much longer. (Enter Margery, L.)

Margery. Good-morning, John, and how be you this fine morning?

John. Frail, Missus, frail, that's what I be. And how be you?

Margery. I'm feeling nicely, thank you. But whatever have you got there, John? You're not going courting, surely?

John (sighing). No, Margery, courting ain't for the likes of me. I be getting a nice bunch of roses ready for the Princess.

Margery (aside). Dear old John! What a good heart he has! (Aloud.) That is good of you, John. The dear young lady will be here in a minute. Ah, I'm afraid we shall be losing her soon.

John. Yes, I'm afraid so. Has any one been here this morning?

Margery. No, not that I know, it's over early yet. There were more than thirty yesterday, and they brought such beautiful pearls, but it was all of no good.

John. No good! Why, they didn't take their pearls away again, did they?

Margery. No, not they. Why, the store-cupboard's full of them.

John. Well, may be I shall get my wages raised at last. And it's about time too. Why, I'm head-gardener, head-coachman, head-butler, head-footman, head-cook, head-gamekeeper, and head everything else all on ten shillings a week. It ain't fair, is it, Margery?

Margery. No, that it ain't. But there's a good time coming, John, never you fear. But here comes my dear young lady.

Princess (entering L.). Well, Margery, I've come at last. Good-morning, John; you've been busy as usual, I see.

John. Yes, Missie—your Royal Highness. I beg pardon, I'm sure. No offence, I hope.

Princess. Oh, no, John. But what have you got there?

John. Well, Missie—Oh, there I go again; I be so forgetful. I made so bold as to gather a bunch of roses for your Royal Highness.

Princess (taking them). Oh, John, how lovely! It is good of you; and I'm sure you've got enough to do without thinking of me.

John. Yes, Missie, I've plenty to do, sure enough. But poor old John's never too busy to do anything for your Royal Highness. And now, if you'll please to excuse me, I must go and get ready to open the door to all the grand young gentlemen who'll be coming to-day. (Goes out L.)

Princess. Poor old John! I'm afraid he has a hard time of it. What a dear old fellow he is! I often wonder, Nurse, why you and he never married.

Margery. Well, dearie, there was a time when we did think of it. But John, bless the dear heart of him! was so terrible poor, that we waited, and waited, and now we be too old to think of such things.

Princess. Oh, it's never too late to mend, Nurse dear. Come, we'll sit down here and have a chat till papa comes. (They sit down on garden seat R.) I do hope I shall be let alone to-day. Only fancy, three hundred and sixty-seven suitors in one week! It really is too much of a good thing. They all come with their smiles, and their bows, and their pearls, and then papa gives them some impossible task, and off they go again. I can't think why papa is so anxious that I should get married. I'm sure I'm quite happy as I am.

Margery. Yes, dearie; but you see his Majesty is getting old, and, as he has no son, he wants to find some nice young prince for you, who'll make a good king after him.

Princess. But there's no hurry, Nurse. And if I must get married, I should like to marry some one whom I really like. It's perfectly horrid being put up to auction like a prize pig at a Christmas show. Did I tell you about those two young men who came yesterday?

Margery. No, dearie.

Princess. Oh, it was so funny. In the morning up came a young man to see papa. He didn't look at all like a prince, and he was so conceited and horrid. But he brought a basket of the most beautiful pearls I had ever seen. And then what do you think happened, Nurse?

Just as we were all looking at them, and wondering where he could have got them, they all began to shrivel up, and turn black, until they were nothing but cinders. Papa was so angry that I was quite frightened. But before he could say a word, the young man was off like a shot, and when we ran out into the garden he was almost out of sight.

Margery. Well, I never! Those pearls must have been witched.

Princess. Yes, Nurse, but that wasn't all. In the afternoon in came another young man, just like the other, strutting like a peacock, with another basket of most lovely pearls. And while we were all admiring them, *they* suddenly turned to cinders too, and off the young man ran before any one could stop him. I wonder who they were. They must have been brothers I should think.

Margery. Well, whoever they were, I should think you are well rid of them. I expect the pixies had something to do with those pearls.

Princess. Perhaps they had. My godmother was a fairy you know. Oh, here comes papa. (Enter King and Queen, L. Princess and Nurse rise.) Look, papa, what lovely roses dear old John has gathered for me.

King (smelling the roses). Ah, very nice, very nice. Well, my dear, it's nearly ten o'clock. Are you ready to receive your visitors?

Princess. Yes, papa, I'm quite ready. But couldn't I have a holiday to-day?

King. A holiday? No, certainly not.

Princess. But surely we might have just one day to ourselves. It would be so nice, wouldn't it, mamma?

Queen. Yes, dear; but you know papa has said that you will be at home every day from ten to four.

King. Yes, we have given our royal word, and we must stick to it.

Margery. But, your Majesty, surely the dear maid could have a half-holiday. It be early closing day to-day, and all the shops shut at two o'clock.

King. Then you shut up too, my good woman. (Aside.) H'm, that's settled *her*.

Princess. Well, perhaps no one will come to-day, so we may have a nice time after all.

King. Don't you believe it. Why, I've had post-cards from fourteen this morning. And here comes John now, so I expect some one's arrived already. (Enter John, L.) Well, John, what is it?

John. Please your Majesty, there's another of them come. He seems a decent sort of chap, that he do; but he ain't much like a prince.

King. Never mind. Has he brought any pearls?

John. Yes, your Majesty, and they do look real beauties.

King. That's good. Well, show him in; we can soon get rid of him if he won't do. (John goes out, L.)

Queen. Now, Margery, go in and get luncheon ready.

Margery. Yes, your Majesty. (She curtsies and goes out, L.)

King. Well, I wonder what luck we shall have to-day. They haven't been a very clever lot so far, I must say.

Princess. But, papa, you do give them such dreadfully difficult things to do.

Queen. Yes, my pet, but you'll find that when the

right one comes he'll be able to do it, won't he, my dear?

King. Oh, yes, we'll see that we don't make it too hard then.

John (entering L. with Jesper). This is the young gentleman, your Majesty.

King (aside to Queen). H'm, not a bad-looking fellow, but he's no prince. (John goes out.)

Queen (aside to King). No, my dear, he'll never do. We must get rid of him somehow.

Jesper (advancing with bow to King). If you please, your Majesty, your Majesty said that your Majesty wanted . . .

King (interrupting him). Not so much "your Majesty". And what do you want, young man?

Jesper. Well, your Majesty, I've seen the proclamation, and as I'd got some nice pearls I thought I'd have a try.

King. Well, then. Let's have a look at them.

Jesper (uncovering the pearls in his basket). Here they are, your Majesty.

King. Splendid! (To the Queen.) Just look, my love.

Queen. Oh, I've never seen such lovely ones. (To Jesper.) Where did you get them?

Jesper. Well, you see, your Majesty, my father's a fisherman.

King (aside to Queen). I thought he wasn't much of it. He'll never do.

Queen (aside to King). No, my dear, you must find something very difficult for him.

King (aside to Queen). Never fear, we'll manage it all

right. (Aloud to Jesper.) So, young man, your father's a fisherman, is he?

Jesper. Yes, your Majesty; and as the found these pearls inside some oysters that he caught, he gave them to me, so that I might have a try for the Princess. Is that the Princess, your Majesty?

King. Yes, that is our royal daughter.

Jesper (aside). She does look nice. I haven't much chance, I know; but still she's worth doing anything for. (Aloud.) And now, your Majesty, what have I got to do?

King. Oh, we'll tell you presently. I've got a nice little task for you after lunch. Of course if you win, you marry the Princess; if you fail, we keep the pearls. You understand, don't you?

Jesper. Oh, yes; I'll have a try, your Majesty.

King. Well, then, come along and have some lunch. It will be ready now, won't it, my dear?

Queen. Yes, I think so. Come along, my love. (She takes the King's arm.) You, young man, can follow with the Princess.

Jesper (offering his arm to the Princess.) Allow me. (She takes his arm, and all go out L.)

CURTAIN.

Note.—In this scene there should, if possible, be two exits on the left of the stage. John should use the exit at the back, and enter the same way when he brings in Jesper. The other characters should use the exit at the front, where, if proper scenery be available, there should be some indication of marble steps, or of an entrance to a palace.

SCENE III.

An open meadow.

King (entering L. with Jesper and John Alltrades). Well, young man, this is the place. And now I'll tell you what you have to do. Are the hares ready, John?

John. Yes, your Majesty, and a more spirity lot I never set eyes on.

King. That's good. Well, young man, my gamekeeper here has twelve young hares yonder. He'll let them loose into this field, and you have to look after them and bring them all safe home at nine o'clock this evening.

Jesper. But, your Majesty, how am I to do that?

King. Oh, I don't mind at all *how* you do it. I leave that entirely to you.

Jesper. But, your Majesty, it's impossible. I can't do it.

King. Very well, then, don't. Just as you please. But of course if you don't you can't have the Princess. Do you give it up?

Jesper. No, your Majesty, I may as well have a try; but it doesn't seem much use.

King. You think so, do you? Well, perhaps you know best. Good-day to you. We meet again at nine o'clock. (Aside.) I think that'll settle *him.* (Goes out L.)

John. Well, young man, I be real sorry for you, that I be.

Jesper. Oh, John, can't you help me?

John. I wish I could, for you seem a proper sort of fellow, but I'm afraid I can't.

Jesper. But, John, don't you think the King would let me do some other task?

John. No, not he. He be so masterful, and I believe he wants to get rid of you. But the Princess, bless her! would be main glad to see you bring they hares home.

Jesper. Do you really think so, John? Then I'll have a try for her sake.

John. That's right. And now I must let they hares loose, or the King'll be mortal angry. Well, good-bye, and good luck to you.

Jesper. Thank you, John, you're a good fellow. Good-bye. (John goes out L.) Well, I'm in for it now. I almost wish I'd never had a try. We could have sold the pearls, and dear old father could have given up fishing, and we should have all been quite comfortable for the rest of our lives. Oh, here they come. (Enter the hares L., all rushing about the stage. Jesper tries to catch them, but after a minute or two they all escape, six to the R. and six to the L. of stage, and Jesper is left alone.) Well, that's done for. I thought it would be no good. What am I to do now? I may as well be off home again. But no, I should like to see the Princess again, and perhaps the King will let me have another try after all. Well, I'll stop here a bit anyhow, and think what to do. (Puts his hand in his pocket.) Hullo! what's this? The magic whistle, I declare, and I'd forgotten all about it. I wonder whether it would bring back the hares. It can't. Why, it's quite impossible. However I may as well have a try. (He blows the whistle, the hares all come running in to the opening symphony of the song. They kneel on

each side of him in the attitude of dogs begging.) My wigs and whiskers, here they are!

The Hares. (Singing. They keep time to the music with their paws.)

The whistle sounds so we are here,
We quickly come from far and near.
We did not loiter by the way,
We never, never stop to play.
We tell you this that you may know
That wheresoever you may go,
You'll never find such little dears,
Such perfectly obedient hares.
We always come when we are called,
We always do as we are bid,
When spoken to we always speak,
And so we're never, never chid.
In fact, from what you've heard us say
You surely must have understood
That we are very, very, very,
Very, very, very good.

(They stand with hands behind their backs.)

We're always good when we're at school,
We never disobey a rule,
We always learn our lessons well,
We never incorrectly spell.
Our sums are nearly always right,
But if at first we do not quite
Succeed, we always try again;
We never, never get the cane.

(All kneeling and waving paws as before.)

We always come, etc.

(Standing, all together.) Yes, we *are* good hares, aren't we?

Jesper. I'm sure you are. But are you *never* naughty?

The Hares. Oh, no, it wouldn't be good form, you see,

and we hares are very careful about our form. Please may we go and play now?

Jesper. Yes, if you like. Only you must promise not to run out of the field. Do you promise?

The Hares. Yes, we promise.

Jesper. That's right. Run away and play, there's dears. (The hares all sit together in a ring on the R. of stage at the back, Jesper watching them. Enter King and Queen, L., unseen by Jesper and the hares.)

King. My crown and sceptre! Why, he's got them all here. This'll never do.

Queen. No, indeed, a fine husband he'd make for Rosabel!

King. Well, I must say I rather like him, my dear.

Queen. So do I, to tell the truth. But, my love, the son of a fisherman! We must get rid of him.

King. Yes, indeed. We must get one of these hares away from him somehow. Now, my dear, you think of something. You're good at making up plans.

Queen. Why, we could catch one now, and walk off with it.

King. No, no, that would never do. He'd see us, and say it wasn't fair. Ha! I've got a plan.

Queen. Well, my dear?

King. No, that won't do either. I must think again. Ah! I've got it now. (He whispers it to the Queen.)

Queen. Capital! How clever you are, my love. Come on, we must be quick. (They go out L.)

Jesper (yawning). This is rather dull. I wish I'd got a book or something. It's only six o'clock, and I must stay here till nine. (To the hares.) I say, may I play too?

The Hares. Yes, do. What shall we play at?

Jesper. I don't know. Oh, let's play at touch.

The Hares. Oh, yes. What fun! Come on. (They play for a minute or two, and then enter Princess, L., disguised as a peasant girl. As soon as the Princess enters they stop playing, and the hares run back to their corner and sit down in a ring again.)

Jesper. Hullo! Who's this? Surely I've seen her face before. It can't be. Yes, it is. No, I must be mistaken. But who is she? I'm losing my memory. Ah, I'll whistle for it. (Does so.) Why, it really is! But I must pretend not to know her. Well, your—I mean, Miss, is there anything I can do for you?

Princess (shyly). Oh, if you please, sir, will you kindly give me one of your hares?

Jesper. Certainly, a whole lock if you like. Have you any scissors?

Princess. I didn't mean that. I want one of those hares over there.

Jesper. I'm very sorry, but I'm afraid I can't give you one.

Princess. But you have so many, you might spare one.

Jesper. No, I'm afraid I can't. They're not mine, they're the King's.

Princess. Oh, you might give me one; I'm sure the King wouldn't mind.

Jesper. Perhaps not, but I do. I have to bring them all safe home to-night. All my happiness depends upon it.

Princess. And all my happiness depends upon having one. I will give you anything you like for it.

Jesper. Anything?

Princess. Yes, anything.

Jesper. Very well, then, you may have one if you like to give me a kiss for it.

Princess. Oh, but I couldn't do that.

Jesper. Then I'm very sorry, but I'm afraid you can't have a hare.

Princess. But I only want a very little one.

Jesper. Then you need only give me a very little kiss.

Princess. Won't you take anything else?

Jesper. No, nothing.

Princess. Well, then, I suppose I must.

Jesper. Yes, I'm afraid so. It will soon be over. Which hare would you like?

Princess (pointing to one of the smallest). That one, please.

Jesper. All right. (To the Hare.) Come here, my dear. You must go with this lady.

The Hare (crying). But I don't want to go.

Jesper. Now, now, now, you know you always do as you are bid.

The Hare. Yes, I always do; but I want to stay here.

Jesper (showing the whistle to the Hare who immediately brightens up). Now you'll go, won't you?

The Hare. Yes, I'll be good! I always am.

Jesper (to the Princess, taking the Hare, and holding it behind him). Now, are you ready?

Princess (shyly). Ye-es.

Jesper. Come on then. (They kiss.) Now you may have the Hare. (The Princess takes the Hare.) Good-bye.

Princess (going off L. with the Hare). Good-bye.

Jesper. What fun! I must just let her get out of sight, and then I'll whistle for it. (Looking off L.) Ah, she's out of the field now. Won't she be surprised? Well, here goes. (He blows the whistle, and the Hare runs in and kneels before him. All the hares sing the chorus of song, "We always come," etc.)

Jesper (patting the Hare on the head). That's a good little Hare. Now you can go and play again. (The Hare goes back to the others. Enter Queen, L., disguised as a countrywoman with sun bonnet, shawl, etc.) Why! who's this old woman? Oh, I think I can guess who she is. Well, mother, and what do you want?

Queen. Oh, if you please, sir, some friends have come to see us quite unexpectedly, and we haven't got anything in the house, and so, please, sir, I thought that you . . .

Jesper (interrupting her). But, my good woman, I've got no money. It's no use coming to me.

Queen (aside). "My good woman," indeed! Oh, if he only knew who he was speaking to. (Aloud.) But, sir, you have all these beautiful hares. Couldn't you spare me one of them?

Jesper. No, that I can't. They're not mine.

Queen. But you might give me just one, it would never be missed.

Jesper. Oh, wouldn't it? My good woman, they're the King's.

Queen. Then I'm sure he'd let me have one; he's so kind.

Jesper. Is he? I'm not so sure of that. No, you can't have one.

Queen. But I'll give anything, do anything for one.

Jesper. Will you? Let's see. Yes, you may have one if you like to run round me three times on tiptoe, turning up your eyes, and cackling like a hen.

Queen (aside). The wretch! Oh, if I could let him know who I am! (Aloud.) Why, just think what the neighbours would say; they would think I'd gone mad.

Jesper. Yes, I expect they would. Well, will you do it?

Queen. Oh, I can't.

Jesper. Very well, then, you know best whether you want a hare or not.

Queen. Oh, dear! I suppose I must. (She runs round him once, cackling.) Will that do?

Jesper. Pretty fair, but I don't think much of the cackling. Now the second time. (She runs round again.) Ah, that's better. Now the last time and the hare's yours. (She runs round the third time and he gives her one of the hares.) Well, I hope you will enjoy your dinner. Good-bye.

Queen (aside.) Oh, the villain! But it's all for Rosabel's sake, so I suppose I must put up with it. (Going off L., aloud.) Good-bye, and thank you, sir.

Jesper. This is splendid. How funny the old lady did look, to be sure! Now I must get my Hare back again. (He blows the whistle, and the Hare runs in as before, singing with all the other hares the chorus "We always come," etc.) Well, I never thought I should have such a good time. (Enter King disguised in smock-frock, slouch hat, etc.)

King (pompously). Now, young man, I want one of your hares.

Jesper (aside.) Hullo! here's another of them. I shall soon be bald at this rate. (Aloud.) Well, I'm afraid you can't have one.

King. Can't have one? What do you mean?

Jesper. I mean what I say. (Very slowly.) You can't have one.

King. Do you know who you are speaking to, young man?

Jesper. Yes, I think so. I expect you're the husband of the old woman who came here just now. But whoever you are you won't have one of these hares. They belong to the King.

King. Never mind. I'll pay you what you like for one. Come, I'll give you a thousand pounds.

Jesper. That's good! Fancy an old fellow like you giving me a thousand pounds! I don't suppose you've a penny to bless yourself with. But I'll tell you what you can do. Just stand on your head, knock your heels together, and cry "Hurrah," and the hare's yours.

King. Eh, what! *Me* stand on my head! Never!

Jesper. Oh, very well. Just as you like. I'm sure I don't mind. (Turning away from the King.) Good-evening.

King (aside). I *must* have one of these hares. I can't let Rosabel marry this fellow; and it's nearly nine o'clock now. (Aloud.) Come, young man, you needn't be too hard on me. I've never stood on my head in my life.

Jesper. Well, it's never too late to begin. Don't be afraid. Do your best, and I won't be too particular.

King. Oh, dear! oh, dear! I hope no one will see me. (Stands on his head for a moment, Jesper helping him up. Getting up again.) There, will that do?

Jesper. It wasn't up to much, but we'll let it pass. Here's your hare. (He hands the King a hare, and the King goes off with it L.) Poor old boy! It was hardly fair on him. Now for my whistle. (He blows the whistle, and the Hare comes in as before. Chorus "We always come," etc.) Now, my dears, it's nearly nine o'clock, and we must go back to the palace. Come along. (He goes off L., the hares tripping after him two and two, and singing the last two lines of chorus, "Oh, we are very, very, very, very, very, very good".)

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.

A room in the palace. The King, Queen, and Princess seated on the R. of the stage. John Alltrades standing behind the King, and Margery beside the Princess.

King (to Queen). Well, my dear, I'm afraid that task was no good. We must think of something else, for I feel sure that he'll bring all the hares safe home.

Princess (aside to Margery). Oh, Nurse, dear, I do hope he will.

Margery (aside to Princess). Yes, dear heart, I'm sure he will; he's such a nice young man.

Queen (to King). But, my love, he is such a clever young scoundrel. What can we give him to do?

King. I know. I'll ask him one of my riddles.

Queen. No, that would never do; they are all far too old. He'd guess them at once.

King. Ah! I have it. John.

John (coming forward). Yes, your Majesty.

King. Go and fetch me a tub. You'll find one in the back kitchen.

John. Very good, your Majesty. (He goes out R.)

Queen. Why, my dear, whatever are you going to do?

King. Never mind, my love, you leave it to me. (John re-enters with tub.)

John. Will this do, your Majesty?

King. Yes, put it down here. (John puts it down in front of the King.) Thank you. Ah, here comes the young man.

Jesper (entering with the hares, who follow him two and two, and group themselves behind him). Well, your Majesty, it's just nine o'clock, and I've brought them back all right, so now I hope your Majesty will keep your promise.

King. Yes, that's all very well, young man; but you haven't won the Princess yet. I've got another little task for you first.

Jesper (getting angry). What! Another task! Why, you promised—— (He stops short and blows the whistle.)

King. Whistling in the royal presence! This is contempt of court. What do you mean by it, eh?

Jesper (smiling). I beg your pardon, your Majesty, but I'd lost my temper. It's all right now, thank you. What does your Majesty want me to do?

King. You see this tub over here?

Jesper. Yes, your Majesty.

King. Well, before you can have the Princess, you must fill it with undoubted truths.

Princess. Oh, papa!

Jesper. But, your Majesty, how are we to know when the tub is full?

King. Don't you worry about that. That's my part of the business.

Queen (aside to King). Splendid! However did you think of it? I didn't think you were so clever.

Jesper. Whatever am I to say? He's done for me this time.

Fairy Godmother (entering suddenly L., unseen by King and Queen). Don't you be too sure of that, Jesper. You tell him about the hares this afternoon.

Princess (aside to Margery). Oh, Nurse, dear, there's Godmamma. It's sure to be all right now.

Margery. Yes, dearie, I'm sure she'll help you.

Jesper. Well, your Majesty, as I was looking after the hares this afternoon, up came a girl in a shabby dress, and begged me to give her one of them. I gave her the hare, but she had to give me a kiss for it, and that girl was the Princess!

King. Is that true, Rosabel?

Princess. Yes, papa, I'm afraid it is.

Queen. Oh, Rosabel! How *could* you?

King. Well, young man, that hasn't filled much of the tub. Go on.

Jesper. After that came an old countrywoman, and she, too, begged for a hare. She got one at last, but she had to run round me three times on tiptoe, turning up her eyes, and cackling like a hen. That old woman was the Queen! (To the Queen.) Isn't that true, your Majesty?

Queen. Ye-es, young man, I'm sorry to say it is.

King (aside to Queen). Well, my dear, I didn't think you would be such a fool.

Queen (aside to King). What did *you* do?

King (aside to Queen). I, my love! do you suppose I'd do anything for him? (Aloud to Jesper.) H'm, young man, that is something, but the tub isn't nearly full yet.

Fairy Godmother (aside to Jesper). Capital! Go on, and the Princess is yours.

Jesper. And then, your Majesty, a very proud and dignified old fellow came along. He said that he must have a hare. But for all he was so proud, before he could get one, he had to stand on his head, knock his heels together, and shout "Hurrah!" That old fellow was the——

King (shouting). Stop! Not another word. The tub is quite full. Well, I suppose you must have the Princess after all, that is to say if she doesn't mind.

Princess. Oh, no, papa; I like him very much.

King. Well, he won't make a bad king if he looks after his subjects as well as he looked after the hares. (Jesper goes to side of Princess.) But how did you manage it, young man?

Jesper. If you please, your Majesty, it was all owing to this lady.

Fairy Godmother (coming forward). Yes, I met him coming to the palace, and as I found he was a nice kind young man I thought I would help him.

Princess. Oh, thank you, Godmamma.

Fairy Godmother. Well, Jesper, the whistle came in useful, after all, didn't it?

Jesper. Yes, that it did. It was a regular Hare Restorer.

Fairy Godmother. And now, couldn't your Majesty do something for poor old John here? He's served you well and faithfully for many a long year.

Princess. Oh, do, papa.

Margery. Yes, do help poor John, your Majesty.

King (to Queen). What do *you* think, my dear?

Queen. I think you might do something. We can afford it now with all those pearls.

King. Well, then, I will. I'll raise your wages, John, and you can have that nice little cottage in the park.

John. Oh, thank you, your Majesty. And now, Margery, that I've got a proper little home for you, will you be Mrs. Alltrades?

Margery. Oh, John! It be so dreadfully sudden. And we be getting old too.

John. Aye, so we be. But I'll be a good husband to you, Margery, so say "yes," do now.

Margery. Well, John, I'm afraid we be two old fools; but there's no denying you.

The Hares. But what is to become of us?

King. Oh, you shall always live in the palace park if you are good.

The Hares. But we always are good. (To Jesper.) Aren't we?

Jesper. Yes, indeed you are. And you always will be, won't you?

The Hares. Oh, yes! (They sing.)

We always come when we are called,
  We always do as we are bid,
When spoken to we always speak,
  And so we're never, never chid.
In fact from what you've heard us say
  You surely must have understood,
That we are very, very, very,
  Very, very, very good.

TABLEAU. CURTAIN.

THE MOLE KING'S DAUGHTER

CHARACTERS.

THE MOLE KING.
THE PRINCESS. (*His Daughter.*)
JOSEPH CHIVELLS. (*A young Gardener.*)
MRS. CHIVELLS. (*His widowed Mother.*)
Six Flower Girls.
Twelve Merry Moles.

"THE MOLE KING'S DAUGHTER."
FLOWER GIRLS.

"THE MOLE KING'S DAUGHTER."
THREE MERRY MOLES.

SCENE I.

Interior of Joseph's cottage. Flower Girls discovered tying roses into bunches for the market.

Flower Girls (singing):—

Tune: "Yankee Doodle".

We gather flowers all the day,
From early morn till dark, it
Is sure there'll be no flowers more gay
To-morrow in the market.
Roses red, and roses white,
Bind them into posies,
Tie them round with ribbons bright,
The sweet and fragrant roses.
We are as busy as can be,
There's no one could work faster;
Such happy girls you'll never see,
And never a kinder master.
Good industrious girls are we,
For there's no one knows if
One of us may wedded be
To the young and charming Joseph.
Roses red, etc.

Mrs. Chivells (entering L.). Well, my dears, have you nearly done?

1*st Flower Girl.* Very nearly, Mrs. Chivells. Aren't they lovely?

2nd Flower Girl. And don't they smell nice? There, we've kept a lovely bunch for you. (Giving her one.)

Mrs. Chivells. Thank you, my dear. I'm sure you're very good to the old woman. What a lot you have gathered! You have been busy.

2nd Flower Girl. Haven't we? And I'm sure there'll be no better flowers than these in the market to-morrow.

Mrs. Chivells. No, that there won't. Ah! you're good girls. And Joseph, he's a good son. I often wondered what I should do when my dear husband died. But Joseph, boy as he was, put his hands in mine, and said, "Mother, dear, you shall never want for anything as long as I have arms to work for you". That's what he said, and bravely has he kept his word. And now, though I say it myself, there's no better gardener in all the country round, and no better gardens. Ah! he's a good son, a good son.

1st Flower Girl. Aye, that he is, and a good master too, isn't he, girls?

Flower Girls. Oh, yes, a kinder master couldn't be found.

Mrs. Chivells. There's only one thing that troubles me. I often tell him that I should like to see him comfortably settled with a nice wife. But he always laughs and says, "Oh, there's plenty of time for that. As long as I've got you, mother dear, I don't want any one else." And yet there are plenty of nice girls in the village. Why! It's nearly five o'clock. He'll be here in a minute, and I haven't got his tea ready yet.

2nd Flower Girl. Can't we help you? We've finished now.

Mrs. Chivells. No, my dears, thank you. You'd better carry the baskets out, and run home. (She lays the cloth, etc.)

2nd Flower Girl. All right. Come on, girls. Good-night, Mrs. Chivells.

Mrs. Chivells. Good-night, girls.

Flower Girls. Good-night. (They go out L., carrying the basket of flowers, and singing.)

Roses red and roses white,
Oh, the pretty posies,
Tied around with ribbons bright,
The sweet and fragrant roses.

Mrs. Chivells. Ah! They're nice bright girls, all of them. But they might be so many wax dolls for all the notice Joseph takes of them.

Joseph (entering R.). Well, mother dear, busy as usual, I see. Is tea ready?

Mrs. Chivells. Yes, my dear, and I've baked one of the cakes for you which you like so much.

Joseph. Thank you, mother; you are good. But it is a shame that you should always be working so hard, when you've got such a strong fellow to work for you.

Mrs. Chivells. Well, my dear, it's little enough I do, I'm sure. I wish you'd let me do something for you in the garden too. There you are, breaking your back all day long, and you won't let your old mother even pull up a few weeds for you.

Joseph. No, mother, that I won't. You've done everything for me for all these years, and now it's time that you should rest. I'm not going to have you laid up with the rheumatics again with standing about on the damp ground.

But you can always come into the garden, you know, and the sight of your dear old face always helps me to work better. But, oh, mother, it is a nuisance.

Mrs. Chivells. What is, my dear? Not my old face, I hope?

Joseph. No, mother, of course not; you know it isn't. But when I went into the garden this afternoon I found it a perfect mass of mole-hills. They're all among the sweet-peas which were coming up so nicely, and all over the asparagus bed. Luckily, they haven't done very much mischief as yet, but they'll ruin everything if I can't catch them. It is too bad.

Mrs. Chivells. But you've got some traps, haven't you?

Joseph. Yes, and it won't be my fault if I don't catch some of the little beasts. And, mother, don't be surprised if I am out rather late to-night, for the little creatures often come up in the dark, and as it's full moon there'll just be enough light to see them. Have the girls got the flowers ready yet, mother?

Mrs. Chivells. Yes, my dear, they'd just finished them when you came in.

Joseph. Then I must be off and look after the vegetables for the market.

Mrs. Chivells. Won't you have another cup of tea?

Joseph. No, thank you, mother. Well, good-bye, and good-night too, for I expect you'll be in bed before I've done my work, and set the traps for my little friends.

Mrs. Chivells. Good-night. Don't be too late. I'll leave some supper for you.

Joseph (going out R.). Thank you; good-night, mother.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

The garden at night. Moles discovered dancing and singing.

The Moles :—

Oh, we moles are always merry,
And are longing to be good;
But it is provoking, very,
To be never understood.
We don't want to hurt your gardens
When we burrow underground;
So we humbly ask your pardons,
As in duty we are bound.

Yes, we may be little sinners,
But we're searching for our dinners,
When we throw up little hillocks from our subterranean holes;
And we may be underrating,
Our behaviour aggravating,
Yet there's no one could be angry with such merry little moles.

Tho' our coats are very black, it's
Most annoying to be told
They're just the thing for ladies' jackets
When the winter winds are cold.
No, our life is not all roses,
And it's horrid when you tap
Us on our soft and tender noses
When we're taken in a trap.

Yes, we may be little sinners, etc.

Joseph (entering suddenly L., catches one of the moles. The others escape right and left.) Aha! I've got you, my beauty.

The Mole. Oh, sir, have mercy.

Joseph. So you can speak, can you?

The Mole. Of course I can. I'm not a common mole.

Joseph. Well, that won't help you. I've caught you at last, and you must die.

The other Moles (all rushing in and falling on their faces before Joseph). Oh! spare him, kind sir. We are such merry little moles, and if you kill him we shall never be merry again. (They sing.)

Oh, we pray you, sir, have pity,
And forgive what we have done,
For we own it is not pretty,
Tho' we did it in our fun.
So we hope you won't make mountains
Of the mole-hills that we made,
Or make sanguinary fountains
Of our life-blood with your spade.

Oh, don't show us such unkindness,
But be sorry for our blindness,
Though we throw up little hillocks from our subterranean holes;
And altho' there's no denying
That our conduct may be trying,
Yet you surely can't be angry with such merry little moles.

For we moles are always merry,
And are longing to be good;
But it is provoking, very,
To be never understood.
We don't want to hurt your garden
When we burrow underground;
And we humbly ask your pardon,
As in duty we are bound.

So don't show such unkindness, etc.

(Falling on their faces again.) Oh! do please forgive us.

Joseph. No, not I. I'll have the lot of you in a minute.

The Moles (standing up). But we haven't done anything.

Joseph. Haven't you? You've nearly ruined my garden with your horrid little mole-hills.

The Moles. We're very sorry; but we didn't mean to do any harm.

Joseph. Perhaps you didn't, but I can't help that.

The Moles. Oh, please forgive us, and we'll never do it again.

Joseph. No, that you won't. I'll take care of that.

The Moles. But, kind sir, we are so young to die.

Joseph. So you may be; but you should have thought of that before. I can't have my garden ruined. You see that, don't you?

The Moles. No, of course we don't—we're blind. (They suddenly fall on their faces towards a great mole-hill which is rising slowly on the R. of the stage at the back.)

Joseph. Why, whatever is the matter now?

The Moles. Hush! It is the Princess.

Joseph (seeing the mole-hill). Oh! horrors! What is this? Well, you can't blame me for making a mountain of this mole-hill. (The mole-hill opens and the Princess appears.)

Princess. Well, children, I heard you were in trouble, and I have come to save you.

Joseph. Am I dreaming? Who are you, lady? and how did you come into the garden?

Princess. Oh, I have just come out of the ground.

Joseph. Come out of the ground!

Princess. Yes, come out of the ground. Didn't you see me?

Joseph. Yes, I thought I did; but I couldn't believe my eyes. Who are you?

Princess. I am the only daughter of the King of the Moles.

Joseph. But, lady——

Princess. Yes, it is quite true. I have come to plead for my little friends. Do forgive them.

Joseph. But, lady, your Royal Highness, I should say, what have you to do with them? You are not a mole.

Princess. Oh, yes I am. We have all been bewitched by a wicked magician. He changed us into moles a long time ago, and made us live underground just like common moles. However, I am allowed every month, when the full moon rises, to take my proper shape; but I have to become a mole again as soon as the moon sets. Oh, it is horrible. Poor dear papa has to be a mole always. But there, it can't be helped, unless some one sets us free, so we must put up with it.

Joseph. But can't anything be done? I would give all I have in the world to help you.

Princess. Yes, I'm sure you would.

Joseph. Do tell me then what I can do; how can I set you free?

Princess. I don't know. Papa knows, but he won't tell me; that's the worst of it. Well, Joseph——

Joseph. What! you know my name.

Princess. Oh, yes, we know all about you and your dear old mother. We moles may be blind, but we can see some things that other folks can't. Now you *will* forgive them, won't you?

Joseph. But they've nearly ruined my garden.

Princess. Oh, I don't think you'll find that they've

done so much damage as you think. Why, we wouldn't hurt your garden for worlds; would we, children?

The Moles. Oh, no, your Royal Highness. Of course we wouldn't.

Princess. Then you will forgive them, won't you? I will promise that they shall never hurt your garden again. Come, you won't refuse, I'm sure.

Joseph. No, I never could refuse a lady. I forgive them.

The Moles (falling on their faces before Joseph). Oh, thank you, kind sir.

Princess. Thank you, Joseph. I am sure you will never be sorry for your kindness. But now I must be going. Papa will be wondering what I am doing all this time. So good-bye.

Joseph. Oh, don't go yet. Do stop a bit longer.

Princess. No, I must be off. You see I am only allowed to take my true shape once a month, and it wouldn't be fair to papa not to be with him part of the time. Of course he can't see me, poor man, but he likes to have me with him, and I can do such lots of things now that I can't do when I'm a mole.

Joseph. But you'll come back, won't you? You'll let me see you again at the next full moon?

Princess. No, I'm afraid I can't.

Joseph. Oh, do.

Princess. Don't think me ungrateful, but I really can't. You mustn't ask it. No, you think you are asking a favour, but it would really be a great misfortune for you. I am only refusing for your good. Good-bye, and try and forget all about me.

Joseph. I can never do that. Oh, do stop a little longer. Only a little.

Princess. No, I have been too long already. I shall always remember your kindness. Good-bye. Good-bye, children, and don't stay out too late. (She steps into the mole-hill, and disappears. Joseph tries to follow, but the mole-hill at once descends.)

Joseph. Oh! she has gone. (To the moles.) Tell her to come back, tell her she *must* come back.

The Moles. No, we're very sorry, but we can't do that.

Joseph. Oh, do.

The Moles. No, we're very, very grateful to you, but we mustn't.

(They sing):—

Oh, don't think our conduct hateful,
For we're very, very grateful,
And we'll throw up no more hillocks from our subterranean holes;
And altho' there's no denying
That our conduct has been trying,
Yet we're glad you are not angry with the merry little moles.

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.

Joseph's garden. The cottage just appearing on the L. of stage. Time, evening, two months later than Scene II. Mrs. Chivells knitting outside the porch. The stage gradually becomes darker during the first part of the scene.

Mrs. Chivells. I wonder what can have come over Joseph lately? He always used to be so bright and happy,

and now he goes about with a face as long as the handle of his own rake. I never hear him singing about the garden as he used to do, and he doesn't even seem to care for his work, though he was always so fond of it. All he seems to do is to go mooning about with his eyes on the ground as if he were looking for hidden treasure. And the poor boy hardly ever eats anything either. I don't know what's come to him. He must have been working too hard; that's what it is. Oh, here he comes. (Enter Joseph, R.) Well, Joseph, come and sit by your old mother a bit. I must put away my work now, for it is getting so dark that my poor old eyes cannot see any longer. Joseph, my dear, I want to speak to you for a minute.

Joseph. Well, mother?

Mrs. Chivells. What is the matter with you, Joseph?

Joseph. Nothing, mother.

Mrs. Chivells. But there must be. You haven't been at all yourself lately. You are not ill, are you, my dear?

Joseph. Oh, no, mother dear. I'm perfectly well. Don't you worry about me.

Mrs. Chivells. What is it then? Has anything gone wrong with the garden?

Joseph. No, the garden's all right.

Mrs. Chivells. Then you must have been working too hard, Joseph. Why don't you get some one to help you?

Joseph. No, mother dear, I don't want any help. I'm quite strong enough to do the work of this little garden.

Mrs. Chivells. Then what is the matter? Do tell me, Joseph.

Joseph. Oh, mother, I can't.

Mrs. Chivells. But I might be able to help you, dear. Won't you tell your poor old mother?

Joseph. But, mother, you'd never believe it. Mother, dear, I'm in love.

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, is that all? I am glad. I've often wished that I could see you comfortably settled. (Eagerly.) Now, tell me all about it. Who is it, Joseph? Is it one of those nice girls who gather your roses for you?

Joseph. Oh, no, mother. If it was I shouldn't be so unhappy.

Mrs. Chivells. Well, then, Joseph, who is the lucky girl?

Joseph. I can't tell you, mother; it's some one far above me.

Mrs. Chivells. But who is she, Joseph? If you are too frightened I will go and ask her parents myself, even if she's the daughter of the Mayor, even if she's pretty Margaret, the Squire's daughter.

Joseph. Thank you, mother dear, I know you would; but she's even farther above me than that.

Mrs. Chivells. Poor boy! what have you done? Surely you've never fallen in love with a real titled lady!

Joseph. Some one even higher than that.

Mrs. Chivells. But, Joseph, you can't—you must be joking.

Joseph. Oh, mother, I wish I were.

Mrs. Chivells. Well, I suppose you won't tell me that you've gone and fallen in love with a princess.

Joseph. Yes, mother, she is the daughter of the King of the Moles.

Mrs. Chivells. What! Oh, my poor boy; he must be mad.

Joseph. No, mother dear, I'm not mad. Oh, how happy I should be if I were.

Mrs. Chivells. But you must be. Come, we'll go into the town and see the doctor to-morrow morning. He'll soon set you all right again. You've been worrying too much about the garden, that's what it is.

Joseph. I'm afraid the doctor couldn't do me any good. No, mother dear, I'm not mad. I'll tell you all about it, and then you'll see that I'm not. You remember how just two months ago I found a lot of mole-hills in the garden?

Mrs. Chivells. Yes, I remember that. And you said you were going to set some traps for them. Did you catch any?

Joseph. Yes, mother, I caught one, and what do you think? I was just going to kill it when it spoke to me, and begged me to save its life.

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, Joseph, you must have been dreaming.

Joseph. No, mother, I was as wide awake as you are now. And then a lot more of the little creatures ran up and begged me to forgive them. But that wasn't all. Suddenly a great mole-hill rose up out of the ground nearly six feet high, and out of it stepped the most beautiful girl that I have ever seen.

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, Joseph!

Joseph. I told you that you'd never believe me. But it's all quite true, as true as you and I are sitting here. And she spoke to me and asked me to forgive the little

moles, and promised that if I would, they should never trouble me again. So I forgave them. And then she told me that she and her father and these other little moles were really all human beings who had been bewitched by a wicked magician. The others have to live as moles always, but she is allowed once every month to take her proper shape.

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, Joseph, take care. She must be a bad fairy who wishes to do you some harm.

Joseph. No, I'm sure she isn't, mother. For I begged her to let me see her at the next full moon, and she said I must never see her again, and must try to forget all about her. But I can't, mother. Last month I waited in the garden all night, but though it was full moon I never saw her, and I have never seen her since. And, oh, mother, I can't bear it much longer. I do so want to see her. And now it is full moon again to-night. I do hope she will come. Anyhow I shall wait for her.

Mrs. Chivells. Then I will wait too.

Joseph. Yes, do, mother, and then perhaps you will believe me. But you'll be cold, mother dear, I'll run in and get your shawl for you.

Mrs. Chivells. Yes, do, my dear. (He goes into the cottage.) Oh, my poor boy! He must be mad; and such a good son too. What shall I do? Oh, what shall I do?

Joseph (entering with shawl from cottage). Now, mother, you will be as warm as a toast, and I don't think we shall have to wait long, for the moon is just rising over the hill.

Mrs. Chivells (aside). I am afraid we shall have to

wait a long time before we see princesses rising like mushrooms out of the ground. But I must humour him. Perhaps he will be all right again if he sees that she doesn't come. (The mole-hill begins to rise again at the back of the stage.) Oh, Joseph, Joseph, what is that?

Joseph. Mother, she's coming! It is the Princess.

Mrs. Chivells. Hold my hand, Joseph, I *am* so frightened.

Joseph. Oh, you needn't be frightened, mother. You won't be frightened when you see her. (The mole-hill opens and out comes the Mole King.) Why, what is this?

Mrs. Chivells. Joseph, come, quick. Oh, what a terrible monster! Come, my boy, my boy. (She tries to drag him into the house.)

Joseph. Hush, mother, it is the Mole King. Don't you see the golden crown on his head?

The Mole King. Yes, good people, I am the King of the Moles.

Mrs. Chivells. Quick, Joseph, don't stop here another minute. I'm all of a tremble.

Joseph. Oh, mother, I can't move.

Mole King. Well, young man, you want to see my daughter, do you?

Joseph. Yes, I—I did, your Majesty, but——

Mole King. But what? You don't fancy me for a father-in-law, eh?

Joseph. Well, your Majesty, I—I didn't——

Mole King. No, I don't suppose you did. Well, my daughter is waiting for you, so come along.

Joseph. Oh, your Majesty.

Mole King. Now, no nonsense. You want my daughter, and you shall have her. Come with me.

Joseph. Oh, mother, help me.

Mrs. Chivells (trying to pull Joseph back into the house). Joseph, Joseph, don't follow the monster.

Joseph. Mother, I must—I can't help it.

Mrs. Chivells. My dear boy, think of your mother. Come, run into the house, quick. (The mole-hill opens again and the Princess appears.)

Princess. Joseph! (Joseph tears himself away from Mrs. Chivells, and rushes to the Princess. He enters the mole-hill with her, and they disappear. Mrs. Chivells tries to follow, but is kept back by the King who steps into the mole-hill, which at once descends.)

Mrs. Chivells (throwing herself on the ground where the mole-hill had been). Joseph, Joseph!

CURTAIN DESCENDS QUICKLY.

SCENE IV.

The Mole King's Palace. A year later. The stage is dark during the first part of this scene. A brazier stands in the middle of the room. The King is seated on the right of it, and Joseph and the Princess on the left a little way off. The moles are seated about the room. The Princess is working.

King. Well, my boy, so you two are to be married to-morrow, are you?

Joseph. Yes, your Majesty.

King. And you're not sorry?

Joseph. Oh, no, your Majesty, how could I be?

King. Well, young man, it's a bit rough to have a wife who's a mole except for a few hours every month. You're quite sure you've made up your mind?

Joseph. Oh, yes, your Majesty.

King. And you're quite happy?

Joseph. Quite happy.

King. Are you sure? Think, now for it's not too late yet. You won't be able to change your mind to-morrow.

Joseph. But I don't want to, your Majesty. I'm perfectly happy—that is——

King. Well, out with it, my boy. Don't mind me. What is it?

Joseph. Well, your Majesty, I can't help thinking of my dear old mother crying out her heart about me. I should like her to know that I am all right, and oh! I should like——

King. You'd like to see her, wouldn't you, my boy?

Joseph. Yes, that I should, your Majesty.

King. Well, then, you shall. I'll go and fetch the old lady.

Princess. No, let me go, papa. She'll be so frightened if she sees you.

King. H'm. That's a nice thing to say of your father! But you may be right. (To the moles.) Have any of you been up above to-night, children?

The Moles. Yes, your Majesty.

King. You've not been spoiling the old lady's garden again, I hope?

The Moles. Oh, no, your Majesty, we promised we wouldn't.

King. Yes, I know you did. But moles will be moles, even though they are longing to be good as you always say you are. But we'll let that pass. Was the old lady there?

The Moles. Yes, your Majesty, she was out in the garden. You know it's full moon to-night.

King. Yes, I know that. (To the Princess.) Well, just run up, my dear, and bring the old lady down, will you?

Princess. Oh, yes, papa, of course I will.

King. That's right. Run along then. Don't be long.

Princess. All right, papa. I'll be back in a minute if I find her. (She goes out R.)

King. Ah, Joseph, she's a lucky girl. What wouldn't I give if I could have my eyes back even for one night in the year. You can't think how I hate this life. Look here, my boy, you've lived here for a year now, haven't you?

Joseph. Yes, your Majesty.

King. Well, I'm afraid I look very horrible, don't I?

Joseph. Oh, your Majesty.

King. Yes, I know what you think, my boy, only you're too polite to say it. Well, I hope I am not so bad as I look, am I?

Joseph. Oh, no, your Majesty. You've always been very kind to me.

King. I'm afraid you won't think so to-night, Joseph. Oh, dear, I shall have to be so cross to your poor old mother, though I would not hurt a hair of her head for worlds. Oh, it is hateful. Try and think well of me, my boy, if you can. I wish I could tell you, but I can't.

Don't be frightened. It will be all right in the end. But here they come.

Mrs. Chivells (outside). I can't see, I shall fall, I know I shall.

Princess. Hold my hand. We're nearly there. Mind that corner. There, that's right. Here we are. Don't be afraid. (They enter R.)

King. Well, old woman, here you are. Nice place, isn't it?

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, it's so dark. Joseph, Joseph, where are you?

Joseph (running to her). Here I am, mother dear. (She hugs him.)

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, my boy, my boy. Come out of this horrible place at once.

Joseph. I can't, mother.

Mrs. Chivells. You can't! and why not, pray? Who'll stop you? Will that ugly monster——

Joseph. Hush, mother! He's the King.

Mrs. Chivells (scornfully). The King! Yes, the King of the Moles, perhaps. But, ugly as he is, he cannot have so hard a heart. See, I will beg him on my knees to let you go. (She kneels before the King.) Your Majesty, give me back my son.

King. I cannot, woman.

Mrs. Chivells (rising). You can't! Why not? Are you moles without hearts as well as without eyes?

King. No, our hearts are just as tender as yours. But I cannot let your son go, for to-morrow he marries my daughter.

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, Joseph, say it is not true.

Joseph. But it is true, mother.

Mrs. Chivells. Your Majesty, give me back my boy, or my poor old heart will break.

King. Listen, woman. You do not wish to leave your son. Would you like to stay here?

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, yes, your Majesty. It is terrible, but I cannot leave my Joseph.

Joseph. Yes, do stay, mother.

King. Well, you may stay, woman. But there is one condition.

Mrs. Chivells. Yes, your Majesty.

King. We moles are blind.

Princess. Oh, papa!

King. If you stay here, you must become blind like us.

Mrs. Chivells. But, your Majesty, if I become blind I shall never see my Joseph again.

King. That's true. But you'll be near him, you'll hear his voice. Come, make up your mind. Be quick. Either you must have your eyes put out, or you must go back at once and never see your boy again.

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, it is too terrible.

King. Very well then. (To the Princess.) Show the old lady the way home, my dear.

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, no, no, no, I can't go back; I can't leave him. Put out my eyes then, cruel monster. Only let me hold my dear boy's hands that he may not be stolen from me again.

King. Blackskin and Furrycoat, heat the irons.

The Moles. Yes, your Majesty. (They heat them at the brazier.)

King. Have you quite made up your mind, woman?

Mrs. Chivells. Yes, I am ready. But be quick. (She sits down, Joseph kneeling by her.)

King. Are you ready, children?

The Moles. Yes, your Majesty.

King. Then do your work.

Mrs. Chivells. Oh, Joseph, Joseph! (The moles approach with the hot irons. As they are about to place them to her eyes there is a tremendous crash, the lights which have been turned down are turned up again, the King and the moles appear in their proper shapes. The two moles have removed the brazier and the irons.)

Mrs. Chivells (jumping up). Why, I can see! Where am I? What has happened? Who are all these people? Joseph, who is that grand gentleman over there?

King. Why, I'm the King, old lady; I'm the ugly monster. Oh, you dear old thing, I could hug you. You've set us free.

Mrs. Chivells. Set you free!

King. Yes, I and my subjects were all turned into moles years ago by a horrid old magician who was jealous of me. Now he's got to take my place. I wonder how the old fellow likes that damp hole!

Mrs. Chivells. But how have I set you free?

King. Why, we had to stop in that horrible underground place until some one would agree to have their eyes put out in order to live among us. Joseph wouldn't do, you see, for he was in love, and people in love are blind already. Yes, old lady, we waited two thousand years to be set free, but we never found any one with love enough to do it till you came.

Mrs. Chivells. Then it's very certain you never tried a mother before.

King. No, I'm afraid we didn't. Well, my boy? You won't mind having me for a father-in-law now, you young scamp?

Joseph. Oh, no, your Majesty.

King. And you won't mind your boy marrying my daughter, old lady?

Mrs. Chivells. But, your Majesty, he's only a poor gardener, and she's a great Princess. He isn't good enough for her.

King. Oh, isn't he? He won't be a poor gardener many minutes longer, I can tell you. He was very good to me when I was in that hideous old mole-skin; and even if he wasn't, he's your son, and that's enough for me. Besides, my daughter here is rather fond of him, I believe. Eh, my pet?

Princess. Oh, yes, papa, you know I am. *He* knows I am. Don't you, Joseph? (She goes over to him.)

Mrs. Chivells. But how did you get on all those months, my boy, without your poor old mother to sew on your buttons, and darn your stockings?

King. Oh, he was all right, old lady. You see we were all in holes then, so it didn't matter. Hullo! What's this? (Singing heard outside and the Flower Girls enter, L.)

Flower Girls (singing):—

Roses red, and roses white,
Buy our pretty posies,
Tied around with ribbons bright,
The sweet and fragrant——(They stop short.)

Why, there's Mrs. Chivells, and Joseph too! Where did you find him?

King. Oh, he's found all right. Don't you ask too many questions. It isn't the first time that a lost son has been found with a mole on his right arm.

Mrs. Chivells. But however did you come here, my dears?

1*st Flower Girl.* Oh, we were going to market with the flowers this morning when we saw this beautiful new palace, so we thought that we would come in and see if we could sell them.

King. That's right. I'll take the lot. They'll come in handy for the wedding.

Flower Girls. The wedding!

King. Yes, your old friend Joseph is to be married to the Princess this morning. You'll stop for it, won't you?

Flower Girls. Oh, yes, your Majesty, if we may. Joseph, we *are* glad. (They all put their aprons to their eyes.) But you won't forget us, will you?

Joseph. No, that I won't.

King. And I'll tell you what, young women; if you like you and Mrs. Chivells can live in that nice old cottage near the palace, and you will be able to look after the Princess's flower-garden.

Flower Girls. Thank you, your Majesty.

Mrs. Chivells. That will be nice, girls. Thank you, your Majesty.

King. That's good. Now we must go, and get ready for the wedding. Oh, I do feel so happy.

SONG.

Tune: "Yankee Doodle".

The Ex-Moles:—

Oh, we are now no longer moles,
No longer blindly groping
Within our subterranean holes,
For our deliverance hoping.
Thanks to Mrs. Chivells be,
Forth her praises tell. Come,
Give three cheers and three times three.

(All cheer loudly. The King pats Mrs. Chivells on the back.)

Mrs. Chivells:—

I'm sure you're kindly welcome.

Flower Girls:—

Tho' we are good, industrious maids,
It's disappointing, very,
When hope within our bosom fades;
We don't feel very merry.

Ex-Moles:—

Joseph is no longer free,
Yet there's no one knows if
You some day may wedded be.

Flower Girls (with aprons to their eyes):—

But not, alas! to Joseph.
But we will quickly wipe away
The tears we have been shedding,
And we'll endeavour to be gay
At our dear Joseph's wedding.

All (except Joseph and the Princess):—

Ring the merry wedding bells,
Joseph now has caught her,
Freed from the magician's spells,
The happy Mole King's daughter.

CURTAIN.

Note.—If it is impossible to change the scenery in the middle of this scene, the lights should be turned very low at the beginning, the stage being set for the Palace. If electric light is available the lights can be turned quite out when the moles approach with the hot irons. The moles have their costume as lords and ladies of the Court under their other dress, and as they are sitting quietly during the scene their moles' dress can be quite loose so that they can quickly slip out of it during the few seconds of darkness.

The mole-hill for the second and third scenes can be easily contrived by making a sort of circular tent of dark brown material, fastened to the ground at the bottom, and with a small wooden hoop near the top. A cord fastened to the top of the tent can be passed over a pulley so that the mole-hill can be raised or lowered as required. There should be a slit in the material both at the front and back, and the mole-hill should be placed by one of the wings so that the Princess, etc., can enter unseen.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

CHARACTERS.

THE KING.
FREDERICK. (*His Son.*)
TIMOTHY CORNFLOUR. (*A Miller.*)
MRS. CORNFLOUR. (*His Wife.*)
KITTY. (*Their Daughter.*)
A NURSE.
RUMPELSTILTSKIN.
Elves.

(She lays the cloth while Mrs. Cornflour takes a pie out of the oven.)

Timothy (entering R.). Well, mother, supper ready?

Mrs. Cornflour. In a minute, Timothy; don't 'ee be in such a hurry. There's a pie for 'ee, fit for a King. (A knock heard.)

King (entering R.). Good-evening, good people. I have lost my way. Can you give me shelter for a while?

Kitty. Oh, mother, the King!

Mrs. Cornflour. The King! My dear life! And me got my old dress on too. (Aside.) Timothy, take your hat off, do, and don't stand staring like that. (Aloud, curtsying.) Oh, your Majesty, do 'ee come in, please. (Aside.) Timothy, do 'ee speak, man. Us don't know what to say.

Timothy (aside). All right, mother. (Aloud.) Your Majesty—— (Aside.) Oh, Kitty, do 'ee say something, there's a good maid.

King. Now, my friend, could you put my horse up for me? I left him at the gate while I came to see if there was any one at home.

Timothy. Put him up? Aye, that I will, your Majesty. And, Kitty, my dear, see if his Majesty will have some supper.

King. Thank you, Miller, I will. I'm as hungry as a hunter. (Timothy goes out R.)

Mrs. Cornflour (curtsying). I'm afraid we've but poor fare, your Majesty. But if your Majesty could eat some of this pie——

King (seating himself at the table). I should think I could, Madam, I've had nothing to eat since breakfast. (He helps himself.) Capital! (To Kitty.) Some wine, child.

Kitty. I'm afraid we haven't got any, your Majesty.

Mrs. Cornflour. No, your Majesty. My man says that water's good enough for the mill, and it would seem sort of ungrateful to drink anything else. Besides, us poor folks could never afford things like that.

King. Well, then, some water. (Kitty pours it out.) You seem fairly comfortable here, Mrs. —— I didn't quite catch your name.

Mrs. Cornflour. Cornflour, your Majesty, Mrs. Timothy Cornflour. Yes, your Majesty, we do pretty well. There's the mill, and our Kitty makes something by her spinning, and then there's the fowls, and the pigs, and the bit of garden.

King. Is this your daughter then?

Mrs. Cornflour. Yes, your Majesty.

King. Ah, a comely and a pleasant maiden.

Mrs. Cornflour. Yes, your Majesty, and she's good and clever too. There are few maids that can spin like our Kitty.

King. Oh, is that all?

Mrs. Cornflour. But, your Majesty, you haven't seen our Kitty's spinning. Why, I believe that if she tried she could spin straw into gold.

King. WHAT! Spin straw into gold!

Mrs. Cornflour. Oh, yes, your Majesty, that's nothing to her.

Kitty (aside). Oh, mother.

Mrs. Cornflour (aside). Do 'ee be quiet, Kitty.

King (aside). The very thing. I'm pretty well ruined by the war. And there's my boy Frederick ought to get married, and I haven't a half-penny to settle on him. For though I have a crown on my head I haven't even half a crown in my pocket. (Aloud.) Madam.

Mrs. Cornflour. Yes, your Majesty.

King. I have a proposal to make.

Mrs. Cornflour. But I'm married already, your Majesty.

King. Tush! I wasn't thinking of that. Your daughter is, as I have said, a comely maiden. Doubtless she is as virtuous as she is fair. She seems to be clever withal. She shall marry the Prince, my son.

Kitty. Marry the Prince!

Mrs. Cornflour (aside). Oh, dear, oh, dear, whatever have I done? (Aloud.) But, your Majesty——

King. Peace, woman! Am I King, or are you? (Enter Miller, R.) Here, Miller, your wife tells me that your fair daughter here can spin straw into gold.

Timothy. Then the woman must be mazed, your Majesty.

Kitty. Oh, father dear, tell him I can't.

Mrs. Cornflour. But, your Majesty, I only said she could if she tried.

King. Then let her try. In three days I return again. Her magic power shall then be put to the test. If she succeeds, she marries the Prince. If not—off with her head.

Mrs. Cornflour (kneeling). Mercy, your Majesty.

King. Silence, woman!

Timothy and Kitty (kneeling). Oh, your Majesty!

King. Bandy no words with me. I must begone. Miller, my horse, and show me the road. In three days, mind, I will return. Now, Miller. (He goes out R., followed by Timothy.)

Mrs. Cornflour. Oh, Kitty, Kitty, I little thought that it would come to this.

Kitty. Never mind, mother dear. Don't worry. It will be sure to come right, somehow. I know it will. The King was very tired, and something must have put him out. He's such a kind gentleman that I feel sure he would never be so cruel as to——

Timothy (entering hurriedly R.). Well, Mrs. Cornflour, you have gone and done it with your silly boasting.

Mrs. Cornflour. Oh, Timothy, Timothy, whatever are we to do?

Timothy. I'm sure I don't know. You've got us into this mess, and you'd better get us out again. But, oh, Kitty, I'd rather your mother should lose her tongue than that you should lose your head.

Kitty. But, father, I'm sure the King is too good-natured to do such a cruel thing.

Timothy. I'm not so sure of that, Kitty. He's eaten my supper, and now he'll take my child. Oh, dear, oh, dear, it's all up with us. (Sinks into chair.)

Mrs. Cornflour (sobbing). Oh, Kitty, forgive me.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

The same. Three days later. A spinning-wheel is standing in the middle of the stage. Kitty is sitting by it disconsolately. The King and Frederick are standing on her right, the Miller and Mrs. Cornflour on her left.

King. Now, Miller, here's the straw, so let's see your daughter set to work. I want to see it done, and so do you, don't you, my boy?

Frederick. Yes, father, that I do.

King. Well then, young woman, make haste and begin.

Kitty. Oh, I can't, your Majesty.

King. Nonsense. Your mother said you could. Why doesn't she begin, Miller?

Timothy (aside). Oh, mother, what *are* we to do?

Mrs. Cornflour. I'm afraid the poor maid's rather shy, your Majesty. You see us poor folks be hardly used to such grand people.

Kitty. Mother dear, couldn't the King leave me alone?

Timothy. Yes, your Majesty, I'm sure she would do better if no one were looking on, wouldn't you, Kitty?

Kitty. Oh, yes, father.

King. But really this is most disappointing.

Frederick. Yes, father, but you know we can always see her do it afterwards.

King. So we can, my boy, so we can. Have you straw enough, maiden?

Kitty. Quite enough, your Majesty. One straw would be enough for me. (Aside.) They say the last straw broke the camel's back. I'm afraid the first will break my neck.

King. One straw enough! More wonderful still. Well, maiden, since you will not let us see the miracle we will begone. But in an hour, remember, we return. In that time you will spin a dozen reels of gold. If not—you know the penalty. Come, Frederick, come, Miller, leave the maid alone.

Frederick. Farewell, maiden. I shall be so glad if you succeed.

Timothy. So shall I, Kitty.

Mrs. Cornflour (crying). So shall I. (Aside to Kitty.) Do 'ee forgive me, Kitty. How could I have been so mad?

Kitty. Good-bye, father. Good-bye, mother. (All go out R., except Kitty.) Oh, whatever shall I do? Why, I couldn't even spin this straw into thread, let alone gold. How could mother ever have said such a thing? And in an hour the King will return, and I must die. Oh, what wouldn't I give to any one who would help me! (Crash of music. Rumpelstiltskin enters L.)

Rumpel. Well, young woman, what's all this fuss about, eh?

Kitty (jumping up). Oh, who are you? What is your name? Where do you come from? How did you come here? What do you want?

Rumpel. What a lot of questions! (Feeling in his pocket.) So sorry, but I must have left my card-case at home. Well, what can I do for you?

Kitty. Oh, I'm afraid no one can do anything for me.

Rumpel. Come, it can't be as bad as that. What's the matter?

Kitty (crying). I've got to spin all this straw into gold.

Rumpel. Oh, is *that* all?

Kitty. That all! Quite enough too, I should think.

Rumpel. Should you? I shouldn't.

Kitty. You would if you were me. If I don't do it in an hour I shall lose my head.

Rumpel. H'm, that would be a pity. But you seem to be losing it now as far as I can see. Well, what will you give me if I do it for you?

Kitty. But you can't.

Rumpel. Oh, can't I? You just wait and see. Come, what will you give me?

Kitty. Anything you like to ask.

Rumpel. Is that a bargain?

Kitty. Certainly.

Rumpel. Then shake hands. (They do so.) Now, where's your spinning-wheel?

Kitty. Here it is, and here's the straw.

Rumpel. Never mind about the straw. Perhaps we'd better throw it away, or the King will never believe you've done it. (Throws the straw out of the door, L.) Now, give me a chair. (He sits down and spins. Music off stage, Mendelssohn's "Bees' Wedding".)

Kitty. Oh, how quickly you work!

Rumpel. Don't I? It's easy enough when you know how. (Showing basket full of reels of gold.) There, will that do? I thought I might as well do a little more while I was about it.

Kitty. Oh! how perfectly lovely!

Rumpel. H'm, it's not bad, I must say.

Kitty. How pleased dear mother will be! However can I thank you, sir?

Rumpel. By keeping your promise.

Kitty. I'll be sure and do that. What would you like?

Rumpel. That's telling. I'll return in a year and a day, and then you must give me whatever I ask for.

Kitty. Oh, yes, I will. You've saved my life, and you can't ask for anything more precious than that. And now do tell me your name that I may know who my kind friend is.

Rumpel. No, I'm afraid I can't do that. But I'll tell

you what I'll do. Take this ring. If the King ever wants you to spin gold for him again, turn the ring round your finger three times and I'll come at once. But, remember, in a year and a day I return whether you turn the ring or not, and then you must give me what I want. Well, good-bye. Don't trouble. I'll let myself out. (Vanishes L., to crash of music.)

Kitty. This is splendid! Father and mother will be glad. I wonder what they'll say when they see all this gold. What a dear little man he was! I wonder what he'll ask for. Well, if the King really keeps his promise I'm sure the Prince will be able to give him anything he wants. Oh, here they are coming back. (She sits down hurriedly at the spinning-wheel as the King and others enter, and then, rising and showing basket.) There, your Majesty, will that do?

King. Oh, you clever girl! Have you really done all that since we left you?

Mrs. Cornflour. Timothy, look here, man. The maid's really done it.

King. Madam, you seem surprised, and yet you told me——

Mrs. Cornflour (confused). Oh, ye-es, your Majesty. But the dear maid's done such a lot.

King. So she has. More than I asked for, too. Well, Frederick, this is capital. To-morrow you shall marry Kitty Cornflour, henceforward her Royal Highness the Princess Catherine.

Kitty. Your Majesty is too kind.

King. Not a bit of it. Not a bit of it. You don't think so, do you, Frederick?

Frederick. Oh, no, father.

King. Well, it wouldn't much matter if you did. To-morrow, Miller, we will send our chariot to fetch the maiden. See that she is ready.

Mrs. Cornflour. But, your Majesty, the poor maid hasn't any proper clothes.

King. Oh, never mind, madam, we'll see to that. Come on, Frederick. (Aside.) Ah, you're a lucky fellow! Farewell, maiden. See that you fail not to be ready. And don't forget the spinning-wheel.

Kitty. I will be ready, sire. (King and Frederick go out R.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.

A room in the Palace. A year later. Kitty is sitting with an embroidery frame before her. The Prince is reading the paper.

Frederick. Why, Catherine, it's just a year to-day since we were married. How time does fly, doesn't it?

Kitty (alarmed). A year to-day! I had forgotten. (Aside.) Then it is a year and a day since I made my promise to the dwarf. This is the very day that he returns.

Frederick. Catherine, what *is* the matter? Aren't you well?

Kitty. Oh, it is nothing. I was only thinking of what happened a year and a day ago.

Frederick. The day we met. Surely that day should bring no sad memories. Why, Catherine, our happiness grows greater every day.

King (entering L.). Good-morning, young people. And how's my little grandson, Catherine?

Kitty. Oh, he's so well, papa. Would you like to see him?

King. Yes, my dear, I should.

Kitty. Then I'll ring for Nurse. (She does so.) Do you know I think he grows more and more like his grandpapa every day. (Enter Nurse, R.) Will you please bring in his Royal Highness, Nurse? (Nurse goes out.)

King. So this is your wedding-day, isn't it, Catherine?

Kitty. Yes, papa, I'm afraid—I mean, I'm glad it is.

King. Well, you don't seem altogether delighted.

Frederick. I'm afraid, father, she doesn't seem quite herself this morning. (Enter Nurse with the baby.)

Kitty. Thank you, Nurse. Give the little Prince to me, and then you may go.

Nurse. Yes, your Royal Highness. (Aside, going out.) Royal Highness indeed! And she nothing but a miller's daughter.

Kitty. Isn't he a dear little fellow, papa? He's as good as gold, and fifty times as precious. Aren't you, my beauty? (Crash of music. Rumpelstiltskin enters suddenly R.)

Rumpel. Good-morning, young woman.

Frederick. Young woman, indeed! Who are you, fellow? How dare you come in here?

King. Turn him out instantly.

Rumpel. You'd better not.

King. Better not, forsooth! Do you know that you address the King?

Rumpel. Well, yes, I was labouring under that impression.

Kitty. Oh, your Majesty, please don't speak roughly to him.

King. And why not, I should like to know? He's not a relation of yours, I hope?

Kitty. No, no, he's not a relation. But he's been very kind to me.

King. Has he? He doesn't look very kind. Not my kind anyhow.

Rumpel. Now, then, I'm in a hurry. I've come to claim your promise.

King. Catherine, who *is* this fellow? What right has he to speak to you like that?

Kitty. Oh, your Majesty, you won't be very angry with me, will you?

King. Angry with you? Why?

Kitty. Well, you remember how you said a year ago that I must spin some straw into gold?

King. Yes, and you did it. It was splendid.

Kitty. I didn't really do it at all, your Majesty. I can't do it, and I never could.

King. Nonsense. Why, you spun more than a dozen reels of it.

Kitty. No, your Majesty, *I* didn't do it. But when I was in great trouble, and thought you would put me to death, this kind gentleman came and did it for me. And he made me promise that I would give him anything he asked for. He said that he would come back for what he wanted in a year and a day.

King. Well, never mind. He shall have what he wants.

Frederick. What will you have? Will you take a thousand pounds?

Rumpel. No, that's no good to me.

King. Well, will you have half my kingdom?

Rumpel. No, thanks. I've a kingdom of my own. Now, young woman, you said you'd give me whatever I asked for, didn't you?

Kitty. Yes, I'm afraid I did.

Rumpel. Then—I'll have the BABY.

Kitty. The baby! My precious pet! Never.

Frederick (drawing his sword). Ruffian, begone, if you would save your life.

Rumpel. Take care!

Kitty (kneeling). Oh, sir, have pity. Won't you take *anything* else?

Rumpel. Nothing. You made your promise and you must keep it.

Kitty. But I never thought——

Rumpel. No, of course you didn't. Come, get up. Well, I'll give you one chance. If in three days you can guess my name you can keep the child.

Kitty. Do you really mean it?

Rumpel. Of course I do, or I shouldn't say so, should I?

Kitty. Oh, thank you, kind sir.

Rumpel. Well, you won't find it very easy, I'm afraid. Now, you've only three days, mind.

> If you succeed, the baby's thine;
> But if you don't, why, then he's mine.

That's poetry. Well, bye-bye. (Goes out to crash of music, R.)

Kitty. Oh, Frederick, what are we to do? How can we guess his name?

Frederick. Oh, we'll find it out all right; won't we, father?

King. Yes, we will issue a Royal Proclamation, and send it round by the town-crier—I mean our Royal Herald.

Prince. And we'll look all through the Dictionary and the Parish Magazines. Oh, we shall find it right enough.

Kitty. He didn't say how many guesses we might have, so we must come to it at last.

King. Oh, yes, we're sure to. Don't you worry. Hurrah, hurrah! The baby will be saved.

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.

A Wood at Night.

Mrs. Cornflour (entering R. with Timothy, who is carrying a lantern). Oh, Timothy, is it much farther?

Timothy. No, my dear, this is the very place I saw in my dream. It must be near twelve now, and at midnight we were to hear something that would make our dear Kitty happy. I wonder whether it will be the name of the dwarf?

Mrs. Cornflour. I do hope so, Timothy. Won't the dear maid be glad if it is! I shall be so pleased if I can help her to find it out, for it's all my fault that this trouble came about. Oh, Timothy, it be mortal cold, and my rheumatics be terrible bad.

Timothy. Now, wife, do 'ee put out the lantern.

Mrs. Cornflour. But it'll be so dark, Timothy.

Timothy. Never mind, do 'ee put it out, or us'll be seen.

Mrs. Cornflour (putting out the lantern). Oh, Timothy, I do feel so frightened. I wish I hadn't come.

Timothy. It's all right, wife. Think of Kitty, and be brave like me. (Starting back.) Oh, what was that noise?

Mrs. Cornflour. I only trod on a twig, Timothy. Come, let's hide behind this tree.

Timothy. All right. You sit there on this shawl, and you'll be as snug as if you were in your own bed at home.

Mrs. Cornflour. But it's so damp, Timothy. I shall be two-double to-morrow.

Timothy. Hush, wife! I do believe there's some one coming. (Elves trip in to music, L.)

Mrs. Cornflour. Oh, what pretty little dears! They be fairies, I declare.

Timothy. Hush, I tell 'ee. They'll hear you. (Elves dance round in a ring.)

SONG.

Elves.

We come, we come, the hour is near
When Rumpelstiltskin will appear.
Merrily dance in fairy ring,
And greet with joy your elfin king.
Yes, lightly dance, and gaily sing,
And greet with joy your elfin king.

(They dance round again in a ring, opening out as Rumpelstiltskin enters L.)

Rumpel. Well, children, having a dance, eh? That's right. You'll soon have a little friend to dance with you —a mortal baby! Just think of that! A dear little mortal baby, and a little Prince, too! The Princess thinks she's going to keep him. But she isn't. For she's got

to guess my name, and she'll never do that, will she? Ha, ha! It's a funny name, isn't it? For (singing)

I brew to-morrow, bake to-day,
Then take the infant Prince away.
Nobody knows from whence I came,
But Rumpelstiltskin is my name.
Yes, Rumpelstiltskin, Rumpelstiltskin,
Rumpelstiltskin is my name.

So dance away, children, dance away. Oh, what fun we'll have, won't we?

Elves (form a ring and dance round Rumpelstiltskin and sing):—

You brew to-morrow, bake to-day,
Then take the infant Prince away.
Nobody knows from whence you came,
But Rumpelstiltskin is your name.
Yes, Rumpelstiltskin, Rumpelstiltskin,
Rumpelstiltskin is your name. (Rumpel. goes out.)

Mrs. Cornflour. Can you mind that, Timothy? I'm sure I can't.

Timothy. Yes, wife, I can mind it. We've saved the poor maid. But do 'ee be quiet till they've gone. (The Elves dance round again, and then trip out hand in hand L.)

Timothy. Hurrah! Don't 'ee forget the name, wife. Let's say over the rhyme.

Nobody knows from whence I came,
But, but, but——

Bother it! I've got a memory like a frog's tail.

Mrs. Cornflour. You've never been and forgotten it, Timothy.

Timothy. No, I know.

Nobody knows from whence I came,
But Rumpelstiltskin is my name.

Yes, that's it. (Singing):—

Rumpelstiltskin, Rumpelstiltskin,
Rumpelstiltskin is the name. (They go out R.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE V.

A room in the Palace. The King's throne stands on a raised platform at the back. One corner in front of the platform is only covered with a sheet of paper. The King is seated on the throne. Frederick is standing on one side with a long roll covered with names. The Princess is seated in a chair on the other side of the throne.

Frederick. There, father, I think this little list will do, don't you?

King. Yes, my boy, I don't think there can be another name on the face of the earth. We've got all the modern names, all the ancient names, all the Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Dutch, Welsh, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian names. All the names there are in fact. Let me see, how many did you say there were?

Frederick. Nine hundred and forty-seven thousand, eight hundred and fifteen.

King. Splendid! Oh, it will be all right, Catherine. Don't you fear. I think your little friend will be rather sold when he sees this.

Kitty. Yes, won't it be delightful! Yes, baby dear, you're perfectly safe now. (Crash of music. Rumpelstiltskin enters suddenly R.)

Rumpel. Perfectly safe, eh? Don't you be too sure. Well, have you guessed my name?

Frederick. Well, we've done our best anyhow. Is it Archibald?

Rumpel. No.

Frederick. Or Ahasuerus?

Rumpel. No.

Frederick. Possibly it is Alexander?

Rumpel. No. I say, you ain't going all through that little list, are you?

Frederick. Well, we had thought of it. But perhaps it might save time if you were to look through it yourself. Let me see, what letter does it begin with?

Rumpel. R.

Frederick. Oh.

Rumpel. No, R., stupid.

Frederick. Pardon me, I quite understood. (Turning over yards of the roll.) Now, if you begin there you will be sure to find it. They are arranged in alphabetical order.

Rumpel. (after looking hastily through the list). No, it is not there. Give me the baby.

King. Not there! It must be. Just look through it again.

Rumpel. No, not I. I'm in a hurry. Now, young woman, keep your promise.

Princess (kneeling). Oh, pity me. Do not take my child. I will give you anything else.

Rumpel. No doubt you will. I know enough of your promises. Now, come on.

Timothy (entering hurriedly, with Mrs. Cornflour, L.). Oh, Kitty dear, do 'ee look here.

King. Miller, you forget yourself. This is the Princess.

Mrs. Cornflour. Please forgive us, your Majesty, but we've found the name. (Soft music of the song in the wood. Rumpel. starts on hearing it.) Here, Kitty, my love, do 'ee take this bit of paper. I haven't got my glasses.

Kitty. Oh, mother, are you sure? Frederick, do read it for me.

Frederick. Ah, let me see. "Nobody knows from whence you came——"

Rumpel. WHAT!

Frederick. "But," what's the word? Oh, I see. "Rumpelstiltskin is your name."

Rumpel. (stamping his foot in rage through the platform). Betrayed! Here, let me go.

King. Ha, ha! Mr. Rumpelstiltskin, how do you feel now, eh?

Rumpel. Let me go. Let me go, I say.

King. Not a bit of it. You've put your foot into it this time, old fellow, and no mistake.

Kitty. Oh, let him go, papa, he can't do us any harm now.

Mrs. Cornflour. Yes, do 'ee let the little fellow go, your Majesty.

King. Very well, then. Frederick, help the gentleman out.

Frederick. All right, father. Anything else we can do for you, Mr. Rumpelstiltskin?

Rumpel. No, only let me go. I've had enough of this. (Frederick helps him out.)

Kitty. But, papa, he was so good in helping me a year ago that it seems ungrateful to let him go like this.

Mrs. Cornflour. Yes, your Majesty, couldn't you do something for the little fellow? He looks so unhappy.

Timothy. Yes, do 'ee, your Majesty.

Frederick. Yes, do, father, for without him I should never have married Catherine.

King. Very well then, I will. Mr. Rumpelstiltskin, it is our royal pleasure that you be made Gold-spinner in extraordinary to the infant Prince. But no larks, mind. Do you accept?

Rumpel. Do you really mean it?

King. Of course I do.

Rumpel. Then shake hands. (They do so, and all sing.)

You brew to-morrow, bake to-day,
Then with the infant Prince you stay.
Nobody knows from whence you came,
But Rumpelstiltskin is your name.
Yes, Rumpelstiltskin, Rumpelstiltskin,
Rumpelstiltskin is your name.

CURTAIN.

THE GOLDEN GOOSE

CHARACTERS.

JOLLIBOY I. (*King of Merrieland.*)
JACK. (*The Woodcutter's Son.*)
DOCTOR PINKPILL. (*The Court Physician.*)
POLICEMAN. A. 1.
THE PRINCESS.
HILDA. } (*Her Companions.*)
MARION. }
MRS. T. TOTEL. (*Landlady of the "Cat and Whiskers".*)
POLLY. (*Her Daughter.*)
MRS. DUCKLING. (*A Market Woman.*)
THE FAIRY GODMOTHER.
CATKIN. } (*Her Attendant Fairies.*)
GOSSAMER. }

Village Children.

"THE GOLDEN GOOSE." SC. II.

"THE GOLDEN GOOSE." SC. III.
THE PROCLAMATION.

SCENE I.

The Village Green. A rustic seat on the left. Village children are playing some singing game on the right. After a few minutes the Princess, with Hilda and Marion, enters L.

Children. Oh! here's the Princess. (They stop their game and curtsy to the Princess.)

Princess. Good-morning, children. Don't stop your game. We like to see you playing.

Hilda. Yes, play one of the merriest games you know, it will make the dear Princess so happy to see you.

Children. What shall we play?

Marion. Oh, play that funny game you are so fond of. It goes like this :—

Put your right foot in
And put your right foot out.

Children. That's Cherry baloo. Come on, let's play that.

Marion. Oh, yes, and we'll play too; won't we, Hilda? (The Princess sits on seat L. and watches them sadly as they form a ring and play.)

Tune : "A Life on the Ocean Wave".

Cherry baloo, baloo,
Cherry baloo, baloo,
Cherry baloo, baloo,
Cherry baloo, baloo.

Put your right hand in,
Put your right hand out,
Give it a bit of a shake,
And turn yourself about.

Oh, Cherry baloo, baloo, etc.

(After a few verses with left hand, right foot, etc., the King and Doctor enter from back of stage. The children run off, and Hilda and Marion return to the Princess.)

King. Well, Doctor, here's the Princess, so you can see her for yourself. I can't imagine what's the matter with her. There she sits, looking just as glum as if she knew she had to take some of your medicine. Come, I'll give you a thousand pounds if you'll give her something to make her laugh.

Doctor (very pompously). Dear, dear, how very strange! Has the Princess been long possessed of this melancholy humour, your Majesty?

King. Ever since she was a baby. Nothing will make her laugh. Why, she doesn't even laugh at my jokes.

Doctor. You don't say so, your Majesty.

King. But I do say so, sirrah. Don't you contradict me. Now, come and look at the Princess. (To the Princess.) Well, my love, so you've been watching the children at their games, eh?

Princess. Yes, papa.

Hilda. They've been playing such a jolly game, your Majesty. We hoped that it would make the dear Princess laugh.

King. Well, didn't it?

Hilda. No, your Majesty. The Princess is so sad this

morning. We've done our very best, but we can't even make her smile.

Princess. Yes, I'm sure you've done your best, Hilda, and so have you, Marion, dear. I do wish I could laugh to please you, but I really can't.

King. Now, Doctor, see what you can do. Remember, you're a rich man if you succeed.

Doctor. Would her Royal Highness graciously put out her tongue? Ah, thank you. And might I feel her pulse? Ah, just so, just so. Let me see.

King. I wish you'd let us see too, Doctor. What can we do with her?

Doctor. Well, I thing that her Royal Highness should be put upon a suitable diet.

King. All right, Doctor. Shall we feed her on nothing but merry-thoughts, or shall we get her a few slices off the funny bone of a laughing hyena?

Doctor. Ha, ha! Your Majesty is pleased to be jocose.

Marion. But, Doctor, couldn't you give the Princess laughing gas?

Hilda. Don't be so silly, Marion, the poor Princess would have to have a tooth out, and that would spoil all the fun, I'm sure.

Doctor. Well, your Majesty, I think the best treatment would be to give her Royal Highness plenty of fresh air and cheerful society—cheerful society.

Marion (aside). I wish I could earn a thousand pounds as easily as that. Don't you, Hilda?

Doctor. And I think she might be allowed to indulge in a few youthful games. Youthful sports are good for the young.

King. Well, come on, Doctor, and show us how.

Marion. Oh, yes, your Majesty. Let's have a game now.

Hilda. Yes, come on. (They all join hands and sing, "Here we go round the Mulberry Bush," the Princess standing mournfully in the middle.)

Princess. Oh, this is too silly. (She breaks away, and goes off L.)

King. Oh, dear, oh, dear! What are we to do?

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

A Wood.

Jack (entering R. with bundle on his shoulder). There, I can't go another step. (He wipes his forehead.) It is hot, and I'm pretty well tired out too. I'll sit down here and have my dinner. A poor dinner too, I'm afraid. It was very different before poor father died. But now my brothers have turned me out of house and home, and have only given me a dry crust to last till I can earn a meal for myself. (He opens his bundle.) Well, anyhow, I'm so hungry that even a crust will be welcome. Hullo! who's this funny old lady?

Fairy Godmother (entering L. and curtsying). Good-morning, young gentleman. I see you're going to have your dinner. And a nice dinner too, I'll warrant. Could you spare a crust of bread for a poor old woman?

Jack (aside). Come, I say, that's rather rough. (Aloud.) Well, mother, I've nothing but a crust myself, and precious tough it is too; but if you like we'll go halves.

Fairy Godmother. Oh, thank you, young gentleman. I'll sit myself down here, and then we can have our dinner nice and comfortable.

Jack. Well, mother, here's your half if you can get your teeth into it. (He begins eating.) Hullo! What did I give you? Wasn't it a tough old crust baked last Saturday fortnight?

Fairy Godmother. Oh, no, young sir. It's a beautiful, juicy sandwich, that it is, bless your kind young heart!

Jack. Well, I'm bothered! I'm sure there was nothing in my bundle but an old crust, and now here's this fine sandwich. I wonder where it came from.

Fairy Godmother. Out of your bundle, I expect.

Jack. Yes, but how did it get there? It certainly wasn't there five minutes ago.

Fairy Godmother. Well, I shouldn't bother how it came there. Anyhow, it's here now. But could you kindly give me a drop to drink, young man? (The Fairies enter unseen and place a bottle and glass in Jack's bundle.)

Jack. No, that I can't, unless you'd like some water from that spring.

Fairy Godmother. But what's that in your bundle? Don't I see a bottle?

Jack. A bottle! (Looks in bundle.) Why, what's this? Ginger beer, by all that's wonderful! (Aside.) The old lady must be a witch. Anyhow, here goes. (He draws the cork and fills the glass which he hands to the Fairy Godmother.)

Fairy Godmother. Here's to your good health, Jack!

Jack. What! you know my name!

Fairy Godmother. Oh, it isn't such a hard name to guess. And I'm a clever old woman, and know more about you than you think. Yes, I know how you've been served at home, and that made me sorry for you. So now that you've shown that you have a good, kind heart, I want to prove that I am grateful. (Calling off.) Catkin, Gossamer! (Enter Fairies.) Quick, children. Bring me my golden goose.

Jack (aside). Well, I never! I thought there was something funny about the old lady.

Fairy Godmother. Why, Jack, you seem surprised.

Jack. Well, I am a little, I must say. You see a fellow hardly expects to see fairies running about in broad daylight. (Fairies re-enter with the golden goose.)

Fairy Godmother. Thank you, children. (They trip out.) Now, Jack, you've been so kind that I'm going to give you this golden goose.

Jack. Oh, I say, does it lay golden eggs?

Fairy Godmother. No, but it will bring you better luck even than that. Now, listen to me. You must bring the goose into the village to-morrow morning. Don't forget. And you must always carry it under your arm. If any one touches it, say:—

Golden goose,
Let not loose.

Then you will see what you will see.

Jack. Am I to carry that great goose about with me wherever I go?

Fairy Godmother. Yes, wherever you go. Don't let it out of your sight.

Jack. But they'll all laugh at me.

Fairy Godmother. Yes, I hope they will.

Jack. Well, mother, no doubt you mean very well, but you can just keep your goose. I don't want it.

Fairy Godmother. Don't be silly, Jack. Come, take the goose, and you'll find that it will bring you the best luck that you ever had in your life. Trust me, and you will never be sorry that you obeyed me. Well, I must be off. Good-bye. Mind you do what I've told you.

Jack. All right, mother, I suppose I must. Good-bye. (Fairy Godmother goes out R.) Well, I'm in for it now. The old lady seems to be some sort of fairy, that's clear enough. And she's a good sort too. That was a splendid sandwich. But how on earth is this goose to bring me any luck? Let me see. What did she say? I'm to go to the village to-morrow morning, and if any one touches the goose I'm to say—what was it? Oh, I know—

Golden goose,
Let not loose.

Yes, that's right. Well, I'll have a try anyway. (Goes off L.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.

The Village. The "Cat and Whiskers" appearing on the right.

Polly (dusting table, arranging chairs, glasses, etc.). Well, now I hope that'll do. Mother is so particular that everything should look nice, for to-day's market day, and

there'll be lots of people coming. And they do say that the King will be here himself, and the Princess too. Poor dear young lady! What a sad life hers must be. They say that no one's ever seen her laugh yet. I don't know what the King hasn't tried to get even a smile out of her, but it's all no good. . . . There, that looks proper. I'll just run in and tidy myself up a bit.

Mrs. Totel (entering quickly). Polly, Polly! Oh, there you are. Do 'ee look here. Such a fine young gentleman's just brought this paper. It's been sent by the King himself, and we're to put it up somewhere where every one can see it.

Polly. Well, mother, what's it all about?

Mrs. Totel. I don't know, Polly. Do 'ee read it out. There's a good maid. I can't find my glasses nowhere.

Polly. What funny writing! I can hardly make it out.

Mrs. Totel. Oh, do 'ee make haste, Polly.

Polly. All right, mother, don't be in such a hurry (Reading.) "Know all men by these presents——"

Mrs. Totel. Us didn't see no presents, Polly.

Polly. No, mother; but perhaps the young gentleman hadn't much money, for all his fine clothes.

Mrs. Totel. Well, never mind, Polly. Do 'ee go on.

Polly. "Know all men by these presents that whereas our Royal Daughter the Princess hath not been known to laugh, smile, or otherwise exhibit any outward tokens of merriment, We, Jollyboy the First, King of this most happy country, do here make a decree that whosoever, provided

that he be not already matrimonially allied, do make, cause, or incite our said Daughter the Princess to laugh with all due heartiness shall receive the aforesaid Princess as his lawful wife, and shall forthwith be appointed our rightful successor in this most happy Kingdom of Merrieland. Given at our Palace under our Royal sign and seal this 17th day of May, in the year One thousand nine hundred and five."

Mrs. Totel. Well, I never, Polly! What does it all mean?

Polly. It means, mother, that whoever makes the Princess laugh is to marry her, and come to the throne when King Jolliboy dies.

Mrs. Totel. Oh, Polly, Polly, why ever were you born a maid?

Polly. I couldn't help it, mother. But where shall we put up the notice?

Mrs. Totel. Give it to me. I'll put it up while you go and clean yourself. (Polly goes out R.) Well, I never did! (Pinning up the paper.) Won't all the young men be mazed about it! I wish I was one of them, that I do. I'd make the dear young lady laugh, I'll warrant.

Jack (entering L.). Good-morning, ma'am.

Mrs. Totel. Good-morning, sir (curtsying). Mrs. Totel, Mrs. T. Totel, at your service, sir. Will you please to take anything?

Jack. Yes, Mrs. Totel, Mrs. T. Totel, if that's your name, I'll have some bread and cheese, and a bottle of ginger beer. You can bring them out here.

Mrs. Totel. All right, sir. In a minute, sir. (Goes out R.)

Jack. Well, here I am, goose and all. I wonder what's going to happen. The old girl said that I should have good luck to-day, and I have had good luck ever since I met her. Last night I wondered where I should get some supper and a bed. I put my hand into my pocket and there was half a crown. I spent that, and yet there was another half-crown in my pocket this morning. Now that's gone too, but no sooner had I spent it than I found another in its place. (Sees notice.) Hullo, what's all this about? (He reads it.) Well, I never! What a funny old boy the King of this country must be! I wish I could make his daughter laugh. That would just suit me. I should look rather nice as King.

Polly (entering R., with tray). Here's your bread and cheese, sir.

Jack. Thank you very much. Here, you can keep the change. (Gives her half a crown.)

Polly. Oh, thank you, sir. (Aside.) What a nice young gentleman!

Jack (aside, feeling in his pocket). It's all right. There's another there. (Aloud.) I say, what's all that about, eh? (He points to proclamation.)

Polly. Oh, that's about our dear Princess. Poor young lady! She's never been known to laugh yet. The King has tried everything he can think of, but it's all no good. So now he has promised that whoever can make her laugh shall marry her.

Jack. But where does she live? I should like to have a try.

Polly. I'm afraid you wouldn't find it any good, sir. But I expect she'll be coming here to-day, so you'll be able to see her for yourself—— My! Whatever have you got there?

Jack. Oh, that's my goose. Fine bird, isn't it?

Polly. But it's all gold! (Aside.) Oh, shouldn't I like a feather for my new hat! (Aloud.) Does it bite, sir?

Jack. Not that I know of.

Polly. May I stroke it, sir?

Jack. Yes, if you like. But I advise you to be careful. I won't answer for the consequences.

Polly (stroking goose). Pretty goose! Nice goose! (She tries to get a feather.)

Jack (aside). What was it I had to say?—— Oh, I know.

Golden goose,
Let not loose.

Polly. Oh, help, help! Sir, do please make your goose let go.

Jack (aside). Hullo, what a lark! (Aloud.) I'm afraid I can't help you. Well, I must be off now. (He takes the goose under his arm.)

Polly (struggling). Help, help! Oh, do set me free, sir.

Jack. I wish I could, but I don't know how. It seems that I shall have to carry about two geese now. (He moves on, Polly following.)

Mrs. Totel (entering from inn). Polly! you bold-faced hussy! Come here this minute. I'll give it to you, you forward minx.

Polly. Oh, mother, do help me. I can't get away.

Mrs. Totel. Can't get away! What do you mean? Now, then, come along with you. (She tries to pull Polly away.)

Jack. Hullo! here's another of them.

Golden goose,
Let not loose.

Mrs. Totel. Here, Polly, do 'ee let go. Let go this instant.

Polly (crying). Oh, mother, mother, what shall we do? We're witched. We shall never get free again.

Jack. Oh, what fun! Well, I'm afraid you must come along now. I'm off.

Mrs. Totel. Now, young man, none of your imperence. You just set me free at once.

Jack. I'm very sorry, ma'am, but I can't. Come along. I'm sorry I can't stay. (Doctor enters L.)

Mrs. Totel. Oh, Doctor, Doctor, do 'ee come and help us to get away.

Polly. Yes, Doctor, do help us, please.

Doctor. Dear, dear, how very remarkable! What can be the matter with these people? I hope it's nothing catching!

Mrs. Totel. Catching, Doctor! It's all so catching as a fly cemetery. Do 'ee help us to get free.

Doctor. How exceedingly curious! Allow me to feel your pulse.

Jack. Oh, this is splendid!

Golden goose,
Let not loose.

Doctor. Why, what's this? My good woman, I beg you, please let go my hand.

Mrs. Totel. It's no good, Doctor. I told you it was catching.

Doctor. Yes, but this is absurd, quite absurd. Young man, if you have anything to do with this, I beseech you to let me go.

Jack. No good, Doctor, it can't be done. Come along. (He starts running. They all cry out.)

Mrs. Duckling (entering with market basket). My dear life! Where be all these folk goin' to?

Doctor. My good woman, do help us to get away.

Mrs. Duckling. That I will, Doctor. Give us your hand.

Jack. Ha, ha!

Golden goose,
Let not loose.

Mrs. Duckling. Now, come along. (Pulls.) Why, mercy on me! I'm stuck fast! (She struggles to get free.) Help, Thieves, Fire, Murder!

Policeman (entering L.). Now, then, what's all this about? Move on, there, move on.

Mrs. Totel. It's all very well to say "move on," but us wants to move off, Mr. Policeman.

Policeman (to Mrs. Duckling). Now, you just come along with me. (Grasps her arm.)

Jack. Hurrah! Now for the bobby.

Golden goose,
Let not loose.

Policeman. Hullo! What's this? Come, let go. You'd better come along quiet. (Jack rushing up and

down, all following shrieking, as King, followed by Princess, Hilda, and Marion, enters at back.)

King. Ha, ha, ha! (laughing heartily, as also do Hilda and Marion).

Princess. Oh, oh, oh! Marion, Hilda, hold my hands. Oh, papa, papa, what *is* the matter? I do feel so funny. (She bursts into shouts of laughter.)

Hilda and Marion. Your Majesty, your Majesty. The Princess is laughing!

King. So'm I, so'm I. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

All Jack's Followers. Oh, your Majesty, please make this young man let go.

King. Why, they're all stuck fast! Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Princess. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Doctor. Oh, your Majesty, please make him set me free. Remember that I'm your Majesty's own doctor.

King. Yes, any one can see that you're a *caught* physician. Ha, ha, ha! Now, young man, just you set these good people free.

Jack. I'm very sorry, your Majesty, but I don't know how.

Fairy Godmother (entering at back). Ah, but I do.

Jack. Hullo! Here's the old lady again.

Fairy Godmother (to the captives). Now, my good people, if you'll promise to do no harm to my young friend here, I'll set you free.

All. I promise.

Fairy Godmother (freeing each in turn with a touch of her wand). Now, your Majesty, didn't you say that whoever should make the Princess laugh should marry her?

King. Yes, old lady, I believe I did.

Fairy Godmother. Then (pointing to Jack), here is her husband.

King. Oh, come now, I really can't give her to him. Why, I don't even know who he is.

Fairy Godmother. Yes, but I do.

King. But, I say, young man, whatever made all those people hang on to you like that?

Jack. Well, your Majesty, will you just stroke my goose?

King (stroking the goose). Pretty goose!

Jack. Golden goose,
Let not loose.

King. Here, you young vagabond, I can't get away. Help me, some one.

Princess (taking his hand). All right, papa.

Hilda. Come on, Marion, we'll help too.

Marion. Yes, come on. (They catch hold of the Princess.)

Jack. Golden goose,
Let not loose.

Princess. Oh, papa, papa, I can't get away!

Marion. No more can I!

Hilda. No more can I!

King. Now, young man, this is all very well, but just set us free at once, or I shall be very angry.

Jack. Well, your Majesty, will you keep your promise, and give me my wife?

King. What, all three of them? Never! I'll lose my crown first.

Jack. No, I only want the Princess, your Majesty. Will you give her to me?

King. Oh, yes, I suppose I must, if she doesn't mind.

Princess. No, I like him, papa; he's such a funny man.

Fairy Godmother. Then, shall I set them free, Jack?

Jack. Yes, please, old lady.

Fairy Godmother. Well, then, I will. (Touches them with her wand.) And now, your Majesty, I may as well tell you who he is. Do you remember how, twenty years ago, your neighbour, King Goldbeard, had a little son stolen away from him?

King. Oh, yes, I remember that quite well.

Fairy Godmother. Well, the little boy was taken to the house of a woodcutter, and was brought up with his own sons. But when the poor woodcutter died, his sons turned the little Prince out of doors with nothing but a crust of bread.

Jack. What! You don't mean——

Fairy Godmother. Now, don't you speak till you're spoken to. Well, your Majesty, I found this young man yesterday sitting down to eat his dry crust, and when I asked him for some, he showed what a good, kind heart he had by giving me half. And so I gave him the magic goose, and told him to bring it here to-day. You know the rest.

King. What! Why! How! Then you must be the long lost Prince Hilarion!

Fairy Godmother. Just so, your Majesty. He is.

King. Bless you, my children.

SONG.

Tune : "The Hunt is up".

All (except King, Jack and Princess) :—

Hurrah, hurrah,
Hurrah, hurrah,
For Jack and the Golden Goose!
For his antics absurd
With that comical bird
Have convulsed us with laughter profuse.

Hurrah, hurrah,
Hurrah, hurrah,
For Jack and the Bride he has won!
Now she's merry as he,
So the King's family
Are "Jolliboys" every one.

CURTAIN.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

CHARACTERS.

The Merchant.
Beauty. (*His Daughter.*)
Her Five Sisters.
The Beast.
Twelve Fairies.

SCENE I.

The Beast's Garden.

(Early morning. The stage, rather dark at first, grows gradually lighter until the Merchant enters, when day has dawned. Fairies are discovered decking the rose-trees, of which there are two or three on each side of the stage, with roses. A table and chair are placed at the front of the stage on the left, and a small garden seat on the right.)

SONG.

Fairies. Deck the trees with roses gay,
Fairy roses, magic roses;
For upon this happy day
Comes a traveller this way
Seeking roses, pretty roses.
If he plucks one we shall see
Our dear king for ever free
From the spells of infamy
By our roses, fairy roses.
See the tree with roses gay,
Fairy roses, magic roses!

Now the table must be spread,
Bring the dishes, dainty dishes;
For the traveller, hither led,
Must by fairy hands be fed.
Bring the dishes, dainty dishes.

Lay the cloth of snowy white,
Set the silver, clean and bright,
Bring all things that give delight,
Tempting dishes, dainty dishes.
See the table ready spread
With the dishes, dainty dishes!

Hark! he comes; and we must meet him,
All is ready, all is ready,
We with fairy song will greet him,
We with fairy feast will treat him,
All is ready, all is ready.
Come, we must no longer stay,
We must lead him on his way,
See the trees with roses gay!
All is ready, all is ready.
Dainty meats, and roses gay,
All is ready, all is ready.

(The Fairies trip out. After a minute the Merchant enters wearily from the same side.)

Merchant. What a lovely garden, and (looking off R.) what a splendid castle! I wonder who lives here. I'll call and leave one of our cards. (Produces one.) "Sunlight Laundry. Good drying grounds. All orders promptly executed. Terms strictly moderate. Encourage home industries." What a chance for my poor girls! I'm glad I *did* lose my way after all. But I *am* tired. I'll sit down on this seat and rest. (He sits down on seat, R.) It's very strange. No one seems to be about, but I'm sure that I heard some one singing as I came along. Oh, I *am* so hungry. I've tasted nothing since dinner yesterday, and I've been wandering about in the forest all night. (He sees the table.) Why, there's a table all ready laid! (He goes up to it.) How good those dishes look! I wish they were for me.

Fairies (singing off the stage) :—

See the table ready spread,
Tempting dishes, dainty dishes !

Merchant. Why, there are the voices again ! (He looks all round the stage.) But I can't see any one. They can't mean all this for me.

Fairies (as before) :—

Yes, for you the table's spread,
Taste our dishes, dainty dishes.

Merchant (aside). Oh, I'll taste them all right. I shan't want asking again. (Aloud.) I can't see you, my kind friends, and I don't in the least know who you are ; but I'm sure I'm very grateful to you. (He sits down and begins eating.) I'll try some of this pie. Ah ! capital ! Now for something to drink. Splendid ! I feel better already. I'm sure my unseen friends are very good. Perhaps they'll be able to tell me my way home again. But whatever am I to say to my poor girls ? They'll be so disappointed. I'm just as poor now as I was when I left home, and I haven't got anything for them. This pie 's good, I'll have some more. (He helps himself.) Poor girls, poor girls ! I did think better days were in store for them. But now all is gone, all is gone. So is the pie. Those little cakes look nice. (He tries one.) They are too. This place must belong to some good fairy who has taken pity on my bad luck. I wish my girls were here. Ah, they'll never get their diamonds and grand dresses now. Like little Beauty, they'll have to be content with roses, for that's all that I can get them, and I haven't even found one for her yet.

Fairies (as before) :—

See the trees with roses gay,
Fairy roses, magic roses!

Merchant (aside). Hullo! There are my friends again! (Aloud, getting up.) Thank you, very much, my fairy friends, for all your kindness. Why, how stupid I am! There *are* some roses. What beauties! The fairies are so kind that I'm sure they won't mind if I take just one. If they *are* fairy roses, they may bring me good luck.

Fairies. See the trees with roses gay,
Pluck our roses, fairy roses.

Merchant. Thank you, I will. (He picks one, and the Beast rushes in.)

Beast. Ungrateful wretch!

Merchant (aside). What a horrible monster! I hope he don't bite. Some sort of watchdog, I suppose. (Aloud.) Here, go away, go away. Good dog, good dog!

Beast. Dog, fellow! I'm the owner of this castle. Who told you that you might gather my flowers?

Merchant (aside). The owner of this castle! (Aloud.) I beg pardon, I'm sure. You have so many roses that you surely won't miss one. (Presenting card.) Allow me to present you with one of our cards. "Sunlight Laundry. Good drying grounds. All orders promptly executed."

Beast. So are mine, fellow; and so will you be in a minute. You've plucked one of my roses, and you must die.

Merchant (falling on his knees). Oh, my lord, forgive me. I didn't pick it for myself, indeed, I didn't.

Beast. Well, I don't see that that makes much difference. Who did you pick it for?

Merchant. For my little Beauty, my lord.

Beast. H'm. You're right there. There's precious little beauty about you.

Merchant. Pardon me, my lord, you don't quite understand. Little Beauty is my youngest daughter.

Beast. Oh, so you've got daughters, have you?

Merchant. Yes, my lord, six of them.

Beast. Poor fellow! Well, get up. (Merchant rises.) Are they pretty?

Merchant. Oh, yes, my lord; and little Beauty is the prettiest of all.

Beast. H'm. They must take after their mother, then. Who are you?

Merchant. A poor merchant, my lord—at least I was a rich merchant once—now proprietor of the Sunlight Laundry. Good drying grounds. All orders——

Beast. Oh, I've heard that before. Go on with your story.

Merchant. Well, my lord, two years ago I lost everything that I possessed. But last month I heard that one ship, which I thought was lost too, had come safe to land. So I started off to claim my share of the cargo, but when I arrived at the city I found that my partner had robbed me of everything.

Beast. Poor fellow!

Merchant. My daughters wanted me to bring them handsome presents, all but little Beauty. She only wanted to see me safe home again; but as I told her that I must bring her something, she asked me to bring just one little rose. She is so fond of roses.

Beast. So am I. Well, Merchant, I will forgive you, but on one condition.

Merchant. Yes, my lord?

Beast. You have stolen one of my roses, and the punishment is death. But you may go free if one of your daughters will come here in your place.

Merchant (kneeling). Oh, my lord.

Beast. Well?

Merchant. My lord, I can't. I would rather die myself.

Beast. Well, no doubt you know best.

Merchant. But, my lord——

Beast. Now, no nonsense. Be quick and make up your mind.

Merchant (rising). My mind is made up. I *will* die, my lord, if die I must. But let me at least go home and say good-bye to my children.

Beast. Well, you can do that if you like.

Merchant. Oh, thank you, my lord.

Beast. But don't think you'll escape. If you don't return in three days, I'll come for you. Well, good-bye. Go along that path. Take the first turning to the right, the second to the left, and then you'll see your way. In three days mind, we meet again, or one of your daughters comes to take your place. (Going off R.)

Merchant. Oh, my lord, I beg pardon, but——

Beast. Well?

Merchant. I am afraid you've forgotten to take my card. "Sunlight Laundry——"

Beast. Oh, bother! Be off with you. (Goes out R.)

Merchant (going out L.). Oh, my poor children, my poor children!

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

Outside the Merchant's Cottage.

(The cottage appears on the left. Outside it Beauty's sisters are discovered singing, and busily washing. A seat is in the garden on the right.)

SONG.

The Sisters. Oh, it's very aggravating
Every moment to be spending
In such work humiliating,
Over wash-tubs lowly bending.
For we find no satisfaction
In this servile occupation;
It's a disagreeable action
For young ladies of our station.

It's a fact past over-rating
That it's very aggravating
To be bending o'er a wash-tub every moment of the day.
Washing other people's linen
Is a task it's hard to grin in,
And it doesn't make home happy as the advertisers say.

Oh, we're sick to death of scrubbing,
And we're daily growing thinner
At our endless task of rubbing,
But we're bound to earn our dinner.
Don't accuse us, please, of malice
For considering that one light
Of a candle in a palace
Beats a cottage full of "Sunlight".

It's a fact past over-rating, etc.

1st Sister. Oh, it really is too bad!

Others. Yes, it's perfectly dreadful! (They all cry.)

1st Sister. I can't stand it much longer.

Others. No more can I.

2nd Sister. What a time that wretched girl is! I'm sure she could have been back by now.

1st Sister. Yes, I'm sure she could. But here she is. (Enter Beauty, R., with empty clothes' basket.) Well, you're a beauty, you are.

Beauty (demurely). Yes, that's what father always calls me. But, whatever is the matter?

2nd Sister. Oh, we're simply sick of scrubbing, scrubbing, scrubbing all day long. That's all.

Others (with their aprons to their eyes). Yes, that's all.

1st Sister. And our hands will never be fit to be seen again.

2nd Sister. Yes, and we shall never get through with it all. There's such a lot. You might have come back quicker to help us.

Beauty. I came as quick as I could. (She rolls up her sleeves and ties on her apron.) Well, never mind. The more work we have the more money we shall get, and I'm here now at any rate. I've taken round the clothes. Lady Longpurse was so pleased that she gave me a shilling extra, and she never said anything about the handkerchief that was missing. There, I'm ready now, so let's get to work again. It won't be for long, for I'm sure dear father will be back again soon, and when he comes we shan't have to work any more.

SONG.

All the Sisters. Tho' it's very aggravating
Every moment to be spending
In such work humiliating,
Over wash-tubs lowly bending.
Yet papa may be returning
Any moment with his treasure,
And our eager hearts are yearning
For a happy time of leisure.

So our eyes we will be drying,
Tho' it's very, very trying
To be bending o'er a wash-tub every moment of the day.
Yet there really is no sin in
Washing other people's linen,
Tho' it doesn't make home happy as the advertisers say.

(During the last few bars of the song the Merchant enters slowly, R., and stands sadly watching them.)

The Sisters (seeing him). Father!

1st Sister (eagerly). Have you got my necklace?

2nd Sister. And my diamonds?

3rd Sister. And my silk dress?

4th Sister. And my bracelet?

5th Sister. And my pearls?

Beauty. Oh, father, dear, I *am* glad to see you back again. But what is the matter? Aren't you well?

Merchant. Yes, little Beauty, I'm well enough. It's not that. (He sinks into seat, R.).

Beauty. But what is it, father? Do tell me.

Other Sisters. Yes, do tell us.

Merchant. Oh, my poor children. It's all up with us.

All. Oh, father!

1st Sister. But what *has* happened, father? Didn't you reach the city?

Merchant. Oh, yes, I got there all right, but only to find that I'd been robbed of every penny.

Beauty. Well, never mind, father. It *is* a bit disappointing, but you shall never want for anything as long as we can work for you.

1st Sister. No, father, that you shan't. It isn't very jolly, but no doubt we shall get to like it in time.

2nd Sister. Of course we shall. The Sunlight Laundry

is a tremendous success, and we've got almost more work than we can do already.

Merchant. Thank you, my dears, you're good girls, all of you. But you haven't heard the worst yet. Beauty, my pet, here is the rose you asked for. I had almost forgotten it.

Beauty. Oh, father, what a lovely one! How good of you to think of it!

Merchant. Yes, Beauty, it's a pretty rose, but it's the cause of all our troubles. Last night, as I was going through the forest I lost my way. I wandered on, and presently I heard voices calling to me. I couldn't see any one, but I walked on and on, and when morning came I found that I was in a beautiful garden in front of a splendid castle. Suddenly I saw a little table with all sorts of good things upon it. Then I heard the voices again, singing, and telling me that it was all for me. I was so dreadfully hungry that I didn't need much pressing, and I made a splendid meal. And then, Beauty dear, I thought of your rose, and, as there were lots of them all round me, I thought it wouldn't matter if I picked just one. But no sooner had I picked it than a horrible monster rushed out, and said that I must die because I had stolen one of his flowers.

The Sisters. Oh, father!

Merchant. I begged him to forgive me, but he wouldn't. At least he said he would only forgive me on one condition. I can't tell you what it is.

The Sisters. Oh, do tell us.

Merchant. No, I really can't.

Beauty. Yes, do tell us, father dear.

Merchant. Oh, little Beauty, he said—he said that he would only forgive me if one of my daughters would come in my place.

Beauty. Then I will go, father dear.

Merchant. No, no, Beauty, you shall never go.

The Sisters. No, Beauty, that you shan't.

Beauty. Oh, yes, father, let me go. It is only right that I should, for it is all my fault. (Three of the Fairies enter, R.) Why, who are these? I do believe they are Fairies.

Fairies. Please, can you tell us if the Merchant lives here?

Merchant (rising). The Merchant? Yes, that's me. At least I was a merchant once (sadly), now proprietor of the Sunlight Laundry. Good drying grounds. All orders promptly executed. May I offer you one of our cards? We make fairy wings a specialty.

Fairies. Thanks, very much, but we always do our washing at home.

Merchant. Oh, I'm sorry. (Puts the card back in his pocket.) But can I offer you anything?

Fairies. No, thanks. Our master, the king——

Merchant and the Sisters. The king!

Fairies. Well, he's called the Beast sometimes.

Merchant and the Sisters. What, *that* cruel monster!

Fairies (indignantly). He's not cruel. He's very good. You shouldn't go by looks. He sent us to see if one of you is coming.

Beauty. Yes, I am.

Fairies. That's right.

Merchant. Beauty, you mustn't go.

Sisters. You shan't go, Beauty.

Beauty. Yes, let me go, father dear. I feel sure that it will be all right.

Merchant. Oh, Beauty, he'll eat you.

Fairies. Our king doesn't eat people! (To Beauty.) Don't be frightened. When will you be ready?

Beauty. Will to-morrow do?

Fairies. Oh, yes, quite well. We'll bring the carriage round at nine. Good-bye.

Beauty. Good-bye. (The Fairies go out R.) What dear little people! I'm not a bit frightened now. Come on, sisters, let's get to work again. I may just as well help you while I can. (They go back to their wash-tubs and the Merchant goes slowly into cottage L.)

SONG.

Oh, it's very aggravating
Every moment to be spending
In such work humiliating,
Over wash-tubs lowly bending.
Yet we find some satisfaction
In our servile occupation,
For this disagreeable action
Brings us good remuneration.

It's a fact past over-rating
That it's very aggravating
To be bending o'er a wash-tub every moment of the day.
Washing other people's linen
Is a task it's hard to grin in,
But the money makes home happy as the advertisers say.

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.

The Beast's Garden.

(Beauty discovered sitting on a garden seat L. with a book in her hands.)

Beauty. Oh, dear, what a funny life this is! I was so frightened when I came here, but the dear Beast is so kind to me that now I'm quite happy. He gives me everything that I want, and is always preparing some delightful surprise for me. And whenever I even think that I should like anything, the little Fairies bring it at once. But I do wish he wouldn't keep on asking me to marry him. I like him very much of course, and I'm very, very grateful to him, but I really couldn't do that. He always comes here every evening after supper, and he always asks the same question just before he goes away. And he always looks so sad when I say "No". I expect he'll be here soon. I do hope he won't ask me again to-night. I wonder how they are all getting on at home without me. I expect they miss me dreadfully. I'm sure I miss them, although I am so happy. I *should* so like to see them again. But the dear Beast won't hear of it. Whenever I ask him if I may go home, or if they may come here, he always says, "No, little Beauty, not yet". Oh, it *would* be delightful if they could all come here!

Beast (entering R.). Well, little Beauty, are you happy?

Beauty. Oh, yes, dear Beast; how could I be unhappy when you are so kind to me?

Beast. But are you quite happy, little Beauty? (He sits on the seat by her side.)

Beauty. Quite, quite happy, dear Beast. (She sighs.)

Beast. But you don't look it, little Beauty. Is there anything that I can do for you?

Beauty. Oh, I should so like to go home and see dear father again.

Beast. Beauty, dear, if you were to leave me your poor Beast's heart would break. Don't you love me, Beauty?

Beauty. Oh, yes, dear Beast, I like you very much.

Beast. I know I'm very ugly, Beauty, but I didn't make a Beast of myself, indeed, I didn't.

Beauty. No, I'm sure you could never do that.

Beast. Then can't you love me, little Beauty?

Beauty. You're a very nice Beast, and you're very, very good to me, but——

Beast. Won't you marry me, Beauty?

Beauty. Oh, I wish you wouldn't ask me, dear Beast; you know I can't.

Beast. But I *must* ask you, little Beauty. I can't help it. I love you so.

Beauty. I'm sure you do, Beast dear, and I'm very fond of you, but I really can't marry you. But——

Beast. Well, little Beauty?

Beauty. But, but I'll always be a sister to you. I really will.

Beast (after a pause). Beauty dear.

Beauty. Yes?

Beast. Do you really want to leave me?

Beauty. No, I don't want to leave you, dear Beast,

but I should so like to see father again. I'm sure he must be grieving dreadfully about me, and I should so like to go and tell him how happy I am. I won't stay long, I won't really. And when I come back I'll stay with you for the rest of my life.

Beast. But if you go away you will forget all about me.

Beauty. No, no; indeed, I wouldn't. I could never be so ungrateful.

Beast. Well, little Beauty, you may go.

Beauty. Do you really mean it?

Beast. Yes, you may go for one week.

Beauty. Oh, thank you, dear Beast.

Beast. But promise me that you will come back as soon as the week is over. I cannot afford to lose my Beauty. I never had much of it. But, oh, I can't joke about it. Beauty, if you don't come back your poor Beast will die. You *will* come back, won't you?

Beauty. Oh, yes, I promise that I will.

Beast. Then take this ring. To-morrow you will wake up in your own little bed at home. When you want to come back turn this ring round upon your finger, and say, "I want to go back to the Palace, and see my Beast again". You won't forget?

Beauty. No, I won't forget. Thank you, dear Beast.

Beast (getting up). Then good-bye, little Beauty. Don't be frightened. When you go to bed put everything ready that you want to take home with you, and when you wake up you will see your father again. But don't forget to come back. I can't live without you. If you don't come back in one week you will be too late. Good-night, little Beauty. Good-night, and good-bye.

Beauty. Good-bye, dear Beast. (The Beast goes out L.) How good he is to me! I'll be sure to keep my promise. (She gets up, and goes out R.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.

The Beast's Garden (*eight days later*).

(The stage is darkened. The Beast, who is dying, is lying on the ground at the right of the stage. The Fairies are grouped about him, waiting upon him, trying to coax him to take some food.)

SONG.

Tune: "Long, Long Ago".

Fairies (singing softly):—

Where are the hopes that were raised long ago,
Long, long ago; long, long ago,
That our dear king would be saved from his woe,
Long, long ago; long ago?
Now he lies dying, for Beauty is gone;
Little she thinks of the harm she has done,
Why did she leave her poor lover alone,
Long, long ago; long ago?

Beauty, remember the promise you made,
Come, come again; come, come again.
Let not your vow from your memory fade,
Come, come again; come again.
Leave not our king to his terrible fate,
Only your presence his pain will abate.
Come, quickly come, or you'll find it too late,
Come, come again; come again.

Two Fairies (coming up to the Beast with some beef-tea and some toast). Your Majesty, do have some of this beef-tea. You haven't eaten anything for two days.

Beast (wearily). No, thank you, children.

The Fairies. But it's beautiful beef-tea. We made it ourselves.

Beast. Yes, you're very good, children; but I really can't take it.

Two other Fairies (with some lemonade and a glass). Then do have some of our lemonade, your Majesty. It's so good.

Beast. No, children, I don't want anything.

All the Fairies. But you must take something, your Majesty.

Beast. No, dear children, there is only one thing that can cure me. But little Beauty has forgotten me, and I must die.

Fairies. But you *musn't* die, you *shan't* die. What would become of *us?* (Enter Beauty, L.) Oh, your Majesty, your Majesty, here she is!

Beauty. Where is he? Oh, he is dead! I have come too late. (She kneels by him.)

Fairies. Oh, Beauty, why didn't you come before?

Beast. No, I'm not dead, little Beauty. Had you forgotten me?

Beauty. No, dear Beast, how could I? But they were so dreadfully busy at the laundry that they begged me to stay, and I never thought that just one day would matter. Oh, if I had been too late I think I should have died too. I will never, never, never leave you again.

Beast. Do you love me then, little Beauty?

Beauty. Love you, dear Beast? Why, I love you with all my heart. I never knew how much I loved you till I saw you lying there.

Beast. Don't be angry with me; I will never ask you again. Will you marry me, little Beauty?

Beauty. Yes, dear Beast; I would do anything to make you well and happy. (A crash of music. The lights are turned up suddenly, and the Beast is revealed in his proper form.)

Fairies. Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! Long live the King and little Beauty!

Beauty. Why, whatever *has* happened? (To the Fairies.) What have you done? Where, oh, where is my dear Beast?

Beast. I'm your dear Beast, little Beauty.

Beauty. But you can't be. You're a grand Prince.

Beast. Yes, little Beauty, I am now, for your love has set me free. I was changed into a Beast years ago by a wicked fairy who made me wear that horrible shape until some one should consent to marry me. You won't mind marrying me now, will you, little Beauty?

Beauty. Oh, no, dear Beast—I mean, your Majesty—that is, if you will have me?

Beast. Of course I will. I want you, little Beauty. (He kisses her "courteously, affectionately and satisfactorily".) But call me by the old name, for it shows how much you loved me. (Enter Merchant and his daughters L.)

Merchant. Why, Beauty, who's this grand gentleman?

Fairies. He's the king.

Merchant. The king! What a chance for my dear

girls! Excuse me, your Majesty, but allow me to present you with one of our cards: "Sunlight Laundry. Good drying grounds. All orders——"

Beast. Thank you, old gentleman, but I've heard that before.

Merchant. But, your Majesty, I think you're mistaken. I——

Beast. No, I think not. "All orders promptly executed." Eh?

Merchant. Yes, your Majesty, but——

Beast. Oh, it's all right, old gentleman. Who stole my roses, eh?

Merchant (kneeling). Oh, your Majesty, forgive me.

Beast. Forgive you, indeed! It's quite the other way about. (He takes the Merchant by the hand and raises him up.) I'm so sorry I was so cross to you, but it had to be done, or little Beauty would never have come here, and then I should have been a Beast always.

Beauty. But, father dear, however did you find your way here?

Fairies. Oh, *we* did that.

Beauty. You?

Fairies. Yes. Though the king is a Beast no longer, we're still Fairies, you know.

Beast. Come, we're wasting time dreadfully. Little Beauty, why shouldn't we be married at once?

Beauty. But perhaps papa——

Beast. Oh, dear, I'd forgotten all about him. Well, Merchant, will you give me your daughter?

Merchant (bowing). Your Majesty does me too much honour.

Beast. Not a bit of it. But look here, you must give up the laundry, you know. I can't have my father-in-law trotting about with his "Sunlight Laundry. Good drying grounds," and all that. I'll settle an estate upon you, and you shall be Lord Sunlight, Baron Washam.

Merchant. Oh, your Majesty!

Beast. Now, no thanks. I owe everything to you and your dear daughter. Come on, Beauty. Let's go to the Palace at once. Come on, young ladies. We can't have the wedding without you.

Sisters. But, your Majesty, we can't come in these frocks. They'd never do for a wedding.

Beast. Oh, I expect we can find something to fit you at the Palace. Eh, little Beauty?

Beauty. Yes, I'm sure you can, you've got such lovely things there, dear Beast—I mean, your Majesty, no—oh, I don't know what I mean, but I am so happy.

Fairies. Three cheers for the King and little Beauty!

All. Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

SONG.

Tune: "Gossip Joan".

Hurrah, then, for the king!
For he is Beast no longer.
Ring out, glad bells, ring a ding a ding a ding,
Tho' evil is a very powerful thing,
Yet love, true love, is stronger.
Ring a ding!

Hurrah, then, for the king!
Set free by love's devotion.
Ring out, glad bells, ring a ding a ding a ding,
Ring out, glad bells, ring a ding a ding a ding,
Ring out in wild commotion!
Ring a ding!

Hurrah, then for the king!
And sing hurrah for Beauty!
Ring out, glad bells, ring a ding a ding a ding,
Ring out, glad bells, ring a ding a ding a ding,
Ring out, for 'tis your duty!
Ring a ding!

CURTAIN.

THE GOOSE GIRL

CHARACTERS.

THE KING.
THE QUEEN.
ARABELLA.
ISABELLA. } *The three Princesses.*
DULCIBELLA.
THE PRINCE.
THE FAIRY GODMOTHER.
* BRIDGET, AN OLD SERVANT.
Twelve Geese.

* The part of "Bridget" might be taken just as well by a boy, the name being changed, say, to Humphrey.

SCENE I.

A room in the Palace. The King and Queen at breakfast.

King (opening his letters). There, my dear; that's very gratifying, very gratifying.

Queen. Yes, my sweet, I'm glad you like the muffins. I buttered them myself.

King. H'm, they *are* rather salt, but I wasn't alluding to them. I have just had a letter from Reed and Printitt asking if they may publish another edition of my poems. It's very gratifying to see that my subjects appreciate the labours of their poet-king. Ah! if only I had more time I'm sure I could do something better still. I thought of a lovely thing while I was dressing this morning. Shall I read it to you, my love?

Queen. Not now, dear, your egg's getting cold. Do get on with your breakfast. You know you have a horrid review at ten o'clock, and you'll be late if you don't take care.

King. Never mind, my love, there's plenty of time. I'll have another cup of tea, please.

Queen. And don't forget your umbrella when you go. It's sure to rain, and you'll spoil your nice new uniform. It always is raining nowadays, but I suppose it's good for the country.

King. Yes, and I'm always reigning too, so I can't say much. Anyhow, I hope it's good for the country. But—Ah! I've got an idea.

Queen (aside). Oh, dear, another poem, I suppose. (Aloud.) Well, my love?

King. Well, it just struck me that we've got three daughters, and——

Queen. I should have thought that you might have noticed that before.

King. Don't interrupt. We have, as I said, three daughters, and they are all fine, well-grown girls. Why shouldn't they do something to earn their living?

Queen. What! You surely wouldn't have three princesses go out as nursery governesses, would you?

King. No, my pet, of course not. Don't be in such a hurry. Now, we've got no son, so they'll have to reign some day. Why shouldn't they begin at once?

Queen. Yes, that's all very well, but what should *we* do?

King. Well, you see, we're not as young as we were, and I think we deserve a rest. Besides, with so much work to do I see so little of you, my love.

Queen. Yes, but——

King. And then I shall only be changing one throne for another. Instead of being the poet-king, I will be the king of poets.

Queen. But we can't live on poetry, my sweet. Love in a cottage may be all very well for young people, but it won't do at our time of life.

King. Oh, that'll be all right. I'm King now, ain't I?

Queen. Yes, of course you are, my dear.

King. Then I'll settle a pension upon myself before I give up the throne. So don't you worry.

Queen. But then it would never do to have three Queens. If you choose one of the girls the others will be dreadfully jealous.

King. Well, Arabella is the eldest, isn't she? But stop—I've a better plan than that. I'll ring for them. (Does so.) Oh, it will be all right, my dear; don't you fret.

Bridget (entering). Did you please to ring, your Majesty?

King. Yes, tell the Princesses to come here for a minute.

Bridget. Yes, your Majesty. (Goes off R.)

Queen. Well, my love, I hope you won't make a dreadful muddle of it. I'm sure you'll be sorry afterwards. What are you going to do?

King. Oh, you'll see presently. Here they come. (Enter Arabella, Isabella and Dulcibella, R.)

Princesses (together). Good-morning, papa.

King. Good-morning, my pets. I wanted to speak to you for a minute.

Princesses (gloomily). Yes, papa.

King. Oh, you needn't be afraid; it's nothing very dreadful. Your mother and I have been talking together, and we think——

Queen. *You* think, my love.

King. Very well, then, *I* think it best that I should give up the throne.

Princesses. Oh, papa!

King. Yes, I thought you'd be surprised. But you

see I can't live for ever, and one of you will have to reign some day. So, as I was saying to your dear mamma, why shouldn't you begin at once?

Dulcibella. But, papa, I'm sure we should never be able to reign as well as you do.

King. Perhaps not, my pet. But I've made up my mind, so there's no more to be said. Now, you can't all be queens—that would never do. So I must choose which of you it shall be.

Isabella (aside). Oh, I hope he'll choose me. I should love to be Queen.

Arabella (aside). He's sure to choose me. I'm the eldest.

Dulcibella. Father, please don't choose me. I would much rather not be Queen.

King. I'm afraid it doesn't much matter what any of you want. That's my part of the business. Now, I'm going to give the kingdom to whichever of you loves me best.

Princesses (together). But we all love you, papa.

King. Yes, I hope you do. But you must each of you tell me how much you love me, so that I can see which loves me best. (Aside to Queen.) That'll be Dulcie, you see if it isn't. (Aloud.) Now, Arabella, you shall have the first turn.

Arabella. But, papa, it is so difficult; I——

King. Never mind, don't hurry. I'll give you while I count five. One, two, three, four, five. Now then.

Arabella. Well, father, I love you better than the most beautiful dress in all the world.

King. What, better than the one you wore at the ball last night?

Arabella. Yes, father, better even than that.

King. Then you must love me a good deal to judge by the time you kept me waiting while you were putting it on. Now, Isabella, it's your turn. You've had plenty of time, so I shan't count for you.

Isabella. Father, I love you better than gold, better than my most beautiful jewels. (Aside.) I think that beats Arabella.

King. That's good. What does my little Dulcie say?

Dulcibella. I can't tell you how much I love you, papa, but I love you very much.

King. Yes, I'm sure you do, my pet; but you must answer my question. (Aside to the Queen.) I'm sure she'll say something nice.

Dulcibella. Oh, papa, I can't.

King. But you must.

Queen. Try and answer your papa, my love.

Dulcibella. I love you very dearly, papa. I can't say more.

King. Oh, yes, you can. Hurry up; I can't wait all day.

Dulcibella. But, papa, you know that I love you. Isn't that enough?

King (getting angry). No, it isn't. You must answer my question. Come, make haste; your sisters answered very nicely.

Dulcibella. Yes, papa, but they're so much cleverer than I am.

King. Now I can't give you another minute.

Queen. Don't be too hard on the poor girl, my dear. I'm sure she can't be well. It will just do as well if she tells you to-morrow.

King. No, it won't; I must have her answer now. Now, Dulcibella, this is the last time I ask you.

Dulcibella. Well, father, if I must answer, the nicest food is tasteless without salt, and so, father, I love you like salt.

King. What! You love me like salt, do you? Ungrateful child. (Rings bell.) Well, you shall have your reward. (Enter Bridget.) Bridget!

Bridget. Yes, your Majesty.

King. Go and tell the cook to tie a bag of salt to this girl's shoulders and send her packing.

Bridget. But, your Majesty——

King. Don't talk to me. Do what I tell you. (To Dulcibella.) Now, then, out of my sight, ungrateful minx. You say you love me like salt, and salt you shall have.

Dulcibella (to Queen.) Oh, mother, can't you help me? Can't you tell him what I mean?

Queen (to King). My dear——

Arabella and Isabella. Papa!

King. Silence! (To Dulcibella.) Now, girl, begone. Bridget, take the girl away.

Bridget. Come along, dearie; never mind, don't cry. It will be all right by and by.

Dulcibella. Good-bye, papa, good-bye, mamma. I didn't mean——

King. Now, then, be off with you.

Queen (to Dulcie). Good-bye, Dulcie, dear; your papa's very angry, but he'll soon get over it: he always does. He'll want you back again before dinner-time. I think you'd better go now, but don't go far. I'll make him understand presently.

Dulcibella. Oh, thank you, mamma dear. I do hope you will.

King. Now, girl, are you going?

Dulcibella. Yes, papa dear. Come on, Bridget; I'm ready now.

Bridget (aside). Poor dearie! It *is* a shame.

Queen and Princesses. Good-bye, Dulcie dear.

Dulcibella (going out with Bridget, R.). Good-bye.

King. Now, Arabella, you and your sister answered so nicely that I am going to divide the kingdom between you.

Arabella and Isabella. But, papa——

King. Now, no nonsense, if you please. Well, that's settled at last. (Enter Prince, L.) Well, young man, and what do you want?

Prince. Good-morning, your Majesty. Why, what's the matter? Where's Dulcibella?

King. Dulcibella? Oh, she's gone away for change of air.

Prince. Gone away?

King. Yes, she's an ungrateful girl, so I've sent her packing.

Prince (very slowly). Sent Dulcie packing!

King. Yes, I think that's what I said—sent her packing.

Prince. Oh, if you weren't her father! But why do I stop here? I'll find her, I'll protect her, I'll seek her to the end of the earth.

Queen. Oh, thank you, brave Prince.

King. Well, I'm afraid you'll have a long journey. Good-bye. I'm sorry that you can't stop. (Prince rushes out L. Fairy Godmother enters R.)

Princesses. Why, here's Godmamma.

Fairy Godmother (to King). Cruel man! What have you done?

King. What have I done? Oh, nothing in particular. Let me see, I had breakfast——

Fairy Godmother. Never mind about breakfast. Where is Dulcibella?

King. Oh, here's some one else asking about Dulcibella. It's most unfortunate, but I'm afraid she's not at home this morning.

Fairy Godmother. Yes, but where is she?

King. I'm sure I don't know.

Fairy Godmother. Yes, but I do. I know how you've sent away the daughter who loves you so dearly.

King. But she doesn't love me dearly. She said she loved me like salt. Nasty stuff!

Fairy Godmother. Stupid man. You'll soon be sorry for this morning's work. (Waves her crutch over him.) In whatever you eat, until you find Dulcibella again, the salt shall turn to sugar. That shall be your punishment.

King. Oh, I shan't mind that; I like sugar.

Fairy Godmother. Do you? You wait and see.

King. Well, anyhow, I can soon find the girl again. She can't have gone far.

Fairy Godmother. She's gone where you won't find her. (To Queen.) But don't *you* be afraid. She'll be quite safe. I will look after her, and restore her to you again.

Queen. Oh, thank you, dear fairy.

Princesses. Thank you, Godmamma.

Fairy Godmother. Well, I must be off. (To King.)

Oh, you'll be sorry soon enough, I can tell you. (To Queen.) Good-bye. I'll take care of her, and I'll see that she's as happy as the day is long. Good-bye. (Goes off R.)

King. Well, she's gone. That's a comfort. Why, it's ten o'clock, and I shall be late for the Review. I must go and change. (Goes off L.)

Queen. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I knew your father would make a muddle of it, but I didn't think it would be as bad as this. (Sinks into chair.)

Arabella. Don't cry, mother, Godmamma will make it all right.

Isabella. Yes, it will be all right. We shall soon see dear Dulcie again. (They kneel each side of her chair trying to comfort her.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

Three years later. A Woodland Scene. Entrance to Fairy Godmother's Cottage on left. Dulcibella discovered with the Geese seated round her. She is disguised with red wig, blue spectacles, and cloak.

Dulcibella. Oh, dear. I wonder why mother makes me wear this horrid wig, and these still more horrid glasses. It can't be because she thinks them pretty, for I'm sure they're not. And yet she must have some reason. Perhaps she wants to disguise me. But why should she want to disguise me, when every one knows that I am her daughter? But *am* I her daughter? If not, whose

daughter am I? I seem to remember living somewhere else a long time ago, but I can't remember where. And I am quite sure that Sally isn't my proper name; but yet she always calls me Sally. I'm sure I had a much prettier name once. I do wish that some one would tell me who I really am. Can't you tell me, dear geese?

Geese. We're very sorry, but we can't
Give you the knowledge that you want.

Dulcibella. Oh, I'm sure you can if you think.

Geese. Yes, but remember, if you please,
We cannot think, we're only geese.

Dulcibella. But you must remember something about me. I'm sure I've not been here more than three years. Can't you remember when I came here?

Geese. We're sorry, but we do not know,
We were not hatched so long ago.

Dulcibella. Oh, I wish you wouldn't always answer in these silly rhymes.

Geese. We won't if you don't like it, but it's always done in fairy plays.

Dulcibella. Well, I really believe you know all about me, only you won't tell. I'm sure you weren't always geese, were you?

Geese. Oh, no, we were eggs once.

Dulcibella. Oh, you *are* silly.

Geese. Yes, but we can't help it. We're only geese you know.

SONG.

When you came to this place
We're unable to say.
For we only were hatched
Just a twelvemonth to-day

If you'd find out the time
You must ask the police,
But you mustn't ask us,
We are nothing but geese.

Dulcibella. No, I will not ask you,
You are nothing but geese.

CHORUS.

For tho' we cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle,
Such a problem we can never, never, never, never, tackle.
No, it really is no use
To interrogate a goose,
Who can only cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle.

(During the Chorus the geese flap their wings to the music.)

Who your mother may be
Is a question abstruse,
Which a sensible girl
Wouldn't put to a goose.
But of some one, it's clear,
You're the daughter or niece;
Who that some one may be
Can't be found out by geese.

Dulcibella. No, I will not ask you,
You are nothing but geese.

CHORUS.

For tho' we cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, etc.

(At the end of the song the geese all rush to the L. of stage, hissing loudly, and flapping their wings.)

Dulcibella. Why, whatever *is* the matter?

Geese. There's some one coming.

Dulcibella (looking off L.). Oh, do be quiet, you silly things, it's only mother.

Geese. We may be silly things, but there's a man coming too.

Dulcibella (looking again). So there is. Well, he won't hurt you. Come and sit down here again. (The geese come back, and sit to R. of stage, still hissing at intervals.) Why, he *is* a nice young man; he's carrying mother's baskets. And he seems to find them heavy, too. Whatever can mother have got in them? Oh, what fun! She's jumped on his back. Poor fellow, what a shame! Mother's no light weight, I'm sure. There, he's falling! No, he isn't. Well, he *must* be strong. But he'll never manage that hill. Yes he will. Here they come.

Fairy Godmother (outside). Now then, steady, steady, you'll have me off.

Prince. No such luck, I'm afraid. Come get off, do. I can't go a step farther.

Fairy Godmother. Oh, yes, you can. Come on, come on; we're nearly there.

Prince. That's a good job. Oh, get off, you old hag, my back's breaking.

Fairy Godmother. Well, here we are at last, so let me get down. (Enter Prince, staggering, with a bundle of grass on his back, and baskets on each arm. Potatoes and other vegetables, or apples, rolling about the stage. Fairy Godmother following, driving him along with her crutch. Geese rush up to Prince hissing angrily, and picking up vegetables.)

Fairy Godmother (driving back geese). Come, get away, do. (To Prince.) Well, I *have* had a lovely ride. Thank you kindly, young man.

Prince (mopping his face with his handkerchief).

Catch me offering to help *you* again. You're a nice old woman, you are.

Fairy Godmother. Yes, so they tell me. (To Dulcibella.) Well, Sally, my dear, this *is* a nice young gentleman. He saw me struggling along with my heavy baskets, and he at once offered to help me. And then he wouldn't be content with that. Only think, when he saw how tired I was he took me on his back. And the road hasn't been long either, for he's such a merry fellow that he nearly made me die of laughing at his jokes. Well, young man, you must be tired. Sally, my dear, get the young gentleman something to drink.

Dulcibella. Yes, mother, that I will. (Goes into cottage, L.)

Fairy Godmother. Well, young man, sit down and rest, for I'm sure you deserve it. Never mind, you've earned your reward, and you shall have it.

Prince. Oh, I don't want any reward, mother.

Fairy Godmother. Perhaps you don't, but that doesn't matter. (Enter Dulcibella from cottage with ginger-beer and glass.) That's right, Sally. (To the Prince.) There, drink that, and you'll soon be yourself again.

Prince (drinking). Thanks, mother, I feel better already.

Fairy Godmother. I thought you would. Now I'll go and get your reward. I shan't be long. But don't go falling in love with my pretty daughter while I'm away. (Goes into cottage.)

Prince (aside). Fall in love with her daughter! That's good! So is the ginger-beer. (Aloud.) I should like a drop more of that ginger-beer, please, Miss.

Dulcibella. Yes, sir. (Fills his glass.) I'm glad you like it, we make it ourselves. (Aside.) Where have I seen his face before?

Fairy Godmother (entering). What! Flirting already! Sally, I'm ashamed of you. Come, be off, you idle hussy. Drive the geese into the orchard.

Dulcibella. Yes, mother. Good-bye, young gentleman.

Prince (carelessly). Oh, good-bye. (Dulcibella goes out, driving the geese before her.)

Fairy Godmother. That's good. It's right to keep young men out of temptation. Well, young man, here's your reward, and I hope you'll like it. (Gives him an emerald box.)

Prince. Thank you, old lady, I'm sure I'm much obliged. It's very beautiful, but I can't open it.

Fairy Godmother. I didn't suppose you could. But there's some one else who can. Well, take it to the Queen, and you'll find that it will bring you what you want most in the whole world. Keep it well, and you will have good luck.

Prince (aside). What I want most is to find Dulcibella, and I'm sure it can't help me to do that. (Aloud.) Thank you very much, mother; I hope it will bring me good luck, for I'm sure I want it. Well, I must be off now, so good-bye.

Fairy Godmother. Good-bye. I'm afraid I did treat you rather shabbily, but I don't think you'll ever be sorry that you met the old lady. Good-bye.

Prince (going off R.). Good-bye. (Fairy Godmother enters cottage.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.

A Room in the Palace. Bridget discovered arranging afternoon tea-things.

Bridget. I wonder when their Majesties will be in. They said they would be home by four o'clock, and it's past that now. But the King, poor dear gentleman, never seems to care for his meals now. Ah, it was very different when Miss Dulcie was here. Poor lamb! She nearly cried her pretty eyes out at going. I do wish the King had never sent her away. (Wipes her eyes with her apron.) And so does his Majesty, I'm sure. It *was* a shame, and she that loved him so dearly too. Ah, here they are at last. (King and Queen enter L.)

Queen. Well, Bridget, is tea ready?

Bridget. Yes, your Majesty, I'll bring it in. The kettle has been on the boil these ten minutes. (She goes out R.)

King (wearily). Oh, I don't want any tea.

Queen. No tea, my love. Why, you ought to be hungry after your long walk.

King. Yes, and so I should be if it wasn't for that horrid old witch. I can't think whatever made you ask her to stand Godmother to Dulcie.

Queen. Well, my dear, at any rate she gave her a very nice present. It isn't everybody's daughter who can weep pearls, you know.

King. That's all very well, but as Dulcie was always bright and smiling it wasn't much good to us. (Enter Bridget with tea, etc., R.)

Bridget. There, your Majesty, I've made some beautiful tea-cakes. I do hope your Majesty will like them.

King. There's no salt in them, Bridget?

Bridget. No, your Majesty.

King. Nor sugar?

Bridget. No, your Majesty.

King. Then I'll try. (Bridget goes out R.) Ah, my dear, it *is* a bit trying when even shrimps taste like bad honey. Oh, dear, I wish I hadn't been so cross with Dulcie. Everything seems to have gone wrong since she went away.

Queen. Well, my dear, something tells me it won't be long before we see her again. And then the Prince is looking everywhere for her. He'll be sure to find her soon. Besides, she'll be as happy as a bird with her Godmother, although you do call the old lady a witch. (Enter Arabella and Isabella, R.) Why, my dears, this is nice! Come and have some tea. We see so little of you nowadays.

Arabella. No, thank you, mother, we've had tea. Papa, it really is too bad.

Isabella. Yes, papa, it really is.

King. What is, my pet? Not the tea, I'm sure. I'll have another cup, my dear.

Arabella. Yes, it is too bad, papa. We were going to have a lovely game of tennis this evening, and now the Foreign Secretary says that we must sign a lot of horrid papers before post time.

Isabella. Yes, papa, and it's such a lovely evening, and the court is marked out and everything. It really is enough to make us wish that we weren't Queens at all.

Arabella. And then, papa, we were going to have such a jolly day on the river to-morrow, but we've just had a telegram to say that some foreign Prince—I can't pronounce his name—is coming to lunch, and so we shall have to stop in to receive him.

King. But why don't you take him up the river with you, my dear?

Isabella. But, papa, he's a dreadful black man. Why, he may even be a cannibal for all we know. It *is* a shame.

King. Well, my dears, I'm sorry I can't help you. You were glad enough to take your poor father's throne three years ago.

Arabella. Yes, papa, we thought it would be such fun to be Queens. But it isn't at all. We can't do a bit what we like.

Isabella. No, papa, and there was a dreadful row in Parliament because we gave so many balls. They said they'd have to double the tax on sugar in order to pay for them.

King. I wish they would.

Isabella. But that would only make the sweets and ices more expensive, so it wouldn't really make any difference. Oh, papa, won't you be King again?

King. No, not I, my pet.

Arabella. Oh do, papa.

King. Not a bit of it. If it wasn't for that horrid old witch, I should never have had a happier time in my life. Your mother feels sure we shall find Dulcie again soon, and when we do I shall be as happy as the day is long. No worry, no bother, nothing to trouble me.

It's splendid. Why, I've had time to write a lovely book of poems, and I've just sent them up to the publishers. I don't think anything better has been written since Shakespeare. No, my pets, you don't catch me being King again.

Isabella. But, papa——

King. No, my dear, that's all settled, so let's talk of something else. Why, who's this?

Prince (enters L. He kneels at Queen's feet).

All. Have you found Dulcie?

Prince (rising). No, your Majesties, I'm afraid not. I've been everywhere, I've searched everywhere, but I can't find her, I can't hear anything about her. But yesterday, as I was passing through a wood not far from the Palace, I met an old woman struggling along with some heavy baskets. I offered to help her, and she gave me this box which she said I was to bring to your Majesty. It's a beautiful box, but I can't open it.

Queen (taking box). Let me try. Why, what's this? It can't be. Yes, it is. My love, Arabella, Isabella, quick, look at this pearl. Why, it's one of Dulcie's tears!

King. So it is. They were always marked with a D. Then you *must* have found her.

Prince. No such luck, your Majesty. But I'll never give up the search.

Queen. Bravely spoken, dear Prince. But this old woman, who was she? Where does she live?

Prince. I don't know her name, but she lived in a cottage with her daughter, an ugly, red-headed girl.

King. Well, *that's* not Dulcie at any rate.

Queen. No, but she must know where Dulcie is. Could you find the cottage again, Prince?

Prince. Yes, I think so, your Majesty; and if you think there's any chance of finding Dulcie, I'll start at once.

King. Then, my boy, I'll come too.

Queen. So will I.

Arabella. We'll all go, mother.

King. No, no, you'd better stop here. I think you've forgotten about the Foreign Secretary.

Isabella. Oh, bother the Foreign Secretary!

King. You mustn't say that, my pet. He's a very excellent official. No, you and your sister must stop here. Your mother and I will go with the Prince. By the way, my boy, you haven't got such a thing as a ham sandwich about you, have you?

Prince. No, your Majesty, I'm afraid not. Why?

King (disappointedly). Oh, I just fancied one, that's all.

Queen. It would be no good, my love, you would only be disappointed again.

King. Never mind. We shall soon find Dulcie now, and then it will be all right. Make haste and get ready, my dear, and tell Bridget to bring a lantern.

Arabella. Yes, make haste and get ready, mamma.

Prince. Yes, come along. Hurrah! she'll soon be found.

All. Hurrah, hurrah!

SCENE IV.

A Wood at Night.

Enter Bridget, L. (with lantern, then King, Queen and Prince).

Queen. Oh, I *am* so tired. Are we nearly there, Prince?

Prince. It can't be much farther, but I can't see any sign of the cottage. But I'll tell you what we'll do. You stay here with his Majesty, and I'll go on with the lantern, and when I've found the way I'll come back for you.

King. Yes, do, my boy. Bridget, give me her Majesty's shawl. Thank you. It's a lovely night, and the grass is perfectly dry. You sit down here and rest, my dear.

Queen. But I shall catch my death of cold, I'm sure I shall.

King. Oh, no, you won't. He'll soon be back again, won't you, Prince? (King and Queen sit down on R. of stage.)

Prince. Oh, yes, I shan't be long. Come on, Bridget, we shall want the lantern. Good-bye, your Majesty.

King. Good-bye. (Prince goes out with Bridget, R.)

Queen. Oh, I do feel so sleepy. I must shut my eyes for a few minutes.

King. All right, my dear, I'm not a bit tired. (Yawns.) I'll keep watch, and wake you when the Prince comes back. (Queen goes to sleep.) I do hope he'll find Dulcie. My love—why, she's asleep already! (Yawns.) Why, I declare I'm feeling sleepy too. But I won't give way to it. No, I'll keep awake all right. (Yawns.) I hope he won't be long. (Rests his head on his hand.) Oh, no, I wont—— (Goes to sleep. After a minute geese enter

slowly and deliberately, first one, then in groups of two or three, to opening symphony of song played softly. Dulcibella enters behind them L.)

Dulcibella. There, lie down here, and we'll rest for a bit. (She sits down on tree trunk L. of stage, the geese grouped on her right.) I wonder why mother made us come out so late. Well, at any rate no one can see me now, so I'll take off this horrid wig. (Takes off wig, spectacles, and cloak, appearing in dress of Scene I.) Ah, that's better. I wonder who that nice young man was who carried mother's baskets on Tuesday. I seem to know his face so well, and yet I can't remember his name. I'm sure I have seen him before, but it must have been a long time ago. Don't you know who he is, dear geese?

Geese. Oh, yes, we know. He's a man.

Dulcibella. Yes, I know that.

Geese. Then why did you ask us? Can't you see that we are sleepy?

SONG.

At this time of the night
It is really absurd
To worry like this
A respectable bird.
We are dreadfully tired
So do leave us in peace,
It's no use to ask us
Who are nothing but geese.

Dulcibella. No, I will not ask you,
You are nothing but geese.

CHORUS.

For though we cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle,
Such a problem we can never, never, never, never tackle.
No, it really is no use
To interrogate a goose,
Who can only cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle.

(The end of the chorus gets gradually slower and slower until the geese all fall asleep.)

Dulcibella. Oh, you silly things!

Prince (entering R. with Bridget). Your Majesty! (sees Dulcibella). Why, it's Dulcie!

Dulcibella. Oh!!! (catches up wig, cloak, etc., and flies off L. Prince tries to follow but the geese jump up, and hissing loudly prevent him.)

Prince. Your Majesty, your Majesty!

King (waking and rubbing his eyes). Well, what is it? Have you found the cottage?

Prince. No, but Dulcie was *here!*

King. Nonsense, you must have been dreaming. *I* never saw her.

Prince. But you were fast asleep.

King. What, asleep? Why, I never even closed my eyes. (Wakes up Queen.) My love, he says he's seen Dulcie.

Queen. Dulcie! You've seen Dulcie?

Prince. Yes, your Majesty, and so has Bridget. Haven't you, Bridget?

Bridget. Aye, that I have, the pretty dear.

King. But where is she?

Prince. I don't know; she ran off this way, but these wretched geese stopped me from following. (To geese.) Oh, get away, do. Come and help me, your Majesty. Hurrah, we shall soon find her now! Come on, come on! (They gradually drive back geese and rush off L. of stage.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE V.

Exterior of the Fairy Godmother's Cottage, the entrance to which is on L. of stage.

Fairy Godmother (coming out of cottage with Dulcibella who is disguised as in Scene II.) Well, my dear, do you know what day it is?

Dulcibella. Yes, mother, it's the 28th of May. Why?

Fairy Godmother. Have you forgotten that to-day you have been with us just three years?

Dulcibella. No, mother, I can remember that. But I can't remember what happened before. I do wish you would tell me.

Fairy Godmother. Well, my dear, you will know soon. But now the time is up, and you can't stay here with me any longer.

Dulcibella. Oh, mother dear, you won't drive me out, will you? I have always been so happy here.

Fairy Godmother. No, my dear, I won't drive you out. But in an hour's time you'll be glad to leave the old woman, I'll warrant, though she has been so kind to you.

Dulcibella. But, mother dear, where shall I go? I have no friends but you in the whole world. Do tell me what you mean.

Fairy Godmother. Oh, you'll know soon enough. Now, go off and mind the geese; there's a good girl.

Dulcibella. All right, mother. (Aside, going out behind cottage, L.) I do wish she'd tell me.

Fairy Godmother. Poor dear! She little knows what's coming. Well, they won't be long now, though they did

lose their way last night. I'll go in and wait for them. (Enters cottage. After a minute enter Prince and Bridget, followed by King and Queen.)

Prince. Here we are at last. I hope the old lady's at home. (Knocks at the door again and again, till Fairy Godmother appears.)

Fairy Godmother. Hoity-toity! What's all this fuss about? Good-morning, good people.

King. Why, it's Dulcie's Godmother. Here, old lady, where's Dulcie?

Queen. Oh, do tell us where Dulcie is.

Fairy Godmother. Dulcie? Dulcie? Who's she?

King. Oh, you know well enough. My daughter Dulcie.

Fairy Godmother. Your daughter Dulcie. Oho! You want Dulcie, do you? The daughter you love so much that you turned her out of house and home three years ago. Well, there's no one lives here but me and Sally. There's no Dulcie here.

Prince. But there must be. I saw her last night in the forest with some geese. I ran after her, but the wretched geese kept me back.

Fairy Godmother. Ha, ha! You *are* a brave Prince! A Prince afraid of geese! Ha, ha! Well, I'll call Sally, if you'd like to see her. (Calls off L.) Sally, Sally, my dear, come here.

Dulcie (entering L.) Yes, mother.

Fairy Godmother. Well, I suppose you'll say *this* is your daughter.

King, Queen and Prince. No, no, that's not Dulcie.

Fairy Godmother. Oh, you think so, do you? Just

wait and see. Now, your Majesty, just three years ago you turned your daughter out of doors, because you thought she didn't love you. But she *did* love you, poor dear.

King. Yes, I'm sure she did. I know well enough what she meant now.

Fairy Godmother. Yes, I expect you do. Well you've had your punishment. You might have saved yourself a lot of trouble, and all the long journey you've just had, if you hadn't driven out the daughter who loved you so dearly.

King. Yes, yes, I'm very sorry; but where is she?

Fairy Godmother. Oh, you'll know presently. Well, when you turned out your daughter I gave her a home and took care of her, and set her to mind my geese.

King. Set Dulcie to mind your geese!

Fairy Godmother. Yes, set her to mind my geese. And as the poor dear was crying her heart out when I found her, I made her forget all about you, and so she's been as happy as can be. Now I'll give her her memory back again. Sally, my dear, take off your wig and cloak. (She does so.)

King and Queen. Why, it *is* Dulcie!

Dulcie (in a dazed way). Why, where am I? Father, mother!

King. Dulcie, dearest. (He hugs her.)

Queen. My pet. (She kisses her.)

King. Forgive me, Dulcie.

Dulcibella. Forgive you, papa? Why, I've forgotten all about that.

Bridget. Oh, Miss Dulcie, I *am* so glad to see you again.

Dulcibella. Dear old Bridget!

King. By the way, old lady, you couldn't let me have a ham sandwich, could you?

Fairy Godmother. Oh, there'll be plenty of time for that presently. It will be all right now, you know.

King. Hurrah!

Fairy Godmother. But haven't you a word for the poor Prince? It's all owing to him, your Majesty, that you found her again. Ah, young man, you're not sorry you met the old woman now, are you?

Prince. No, not I. I'd carry you fifty times for this.

Arabella and Isabella (entering hurriedly, R.). Papa, papa! Why, you've found Dulcie!

Arabella. Oh, Dulcie, this *is* nice!

Isabella. Dulcie, dear, it has been so horrid without you. Oh, papa, this parcel came for you last night, and the man wouldn't leave it without the money, so we thought it must be important. (Gives King parcel.)

King. Why, it's from Reed and Printitt. It must be the proofs of my new book. Well, they *have* been quick. (Opens parcel and sees note.) Why, what's this? They've sent the poems back. Oh, some corrections, I suppose. (Reads note.) "Messrs. Reed and Printitt regret that they are unable to publish his Majesty's poems, but——" The scoundrels! What do they mean? (To the Queen.) Just listen to this, my love. "——but the market is already overstocked with this kind of thing. Of course, when his Majesty was King it was a different matter. As it is, Messrs. Reed and Printitt feel that they cannot undertake the risk of publication." Do you hear, my love? They reject my poems, *my* poems! Did you ever hear of

such impudence? Fancy comparing *my* poems with the stuff other people write! Ah, I'll pay them out, the ruffians! "When His Majesty was King it was a different matter." Oh, it was, was it? Then I'll reign again.

Arabella. Yes, do, papa.

Isabella. Oh, do, papa; we are so tired of being Queens.

King. That's good. But, look here, you won't want to reign again, will you?

Arabella and Isabella. Oh, no, papa.

King. Then, Prince, you shall marry Dulcie, and succeed me.

Prince. But perhaps Dulcie——

King. Oh, she won't mind. Will you, my pet?

Dulcie. Oh, no, papa.

King. Then, that's settled. Bless you, my children. Won't Reed and Printitt be sorry?

Geese (who have entered quietly behind principals during the reading of Reed and Printitt's letter, and who now come forward). But you'll never go and leave *us?*

Dulcie. Oh, no, I'll take you to the Palace; that is, if papa doesn't mind.

King. Oh, no, I don't mind. Why, what little ducks! I wish I'd brought my camera.

Geese. We're not ducks, we're geese.

King. Well, then, little ducks of geese. Don't be so particular. And now, old lady, you must come and dance at the wedding. When is it to be, my boy?

Prince. I don't know, your Majesty. Would to-morrow do? But you must ask Dulcie.

King. Well, Dulcie?

Prince. I don't know, papa; you must ask mamma.

King. Well, my love?

Queen. Oh, I think you know best, my sweet.

King. Oh, dear, doesn't any one know? (To the geese.) What do *you* say?

Geese. We're very sorry, but we don't know. We're only geese.

CHORUS.

For though we cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle,
Such a problem we can never, never, never, never tackle.
No, it really is no use
To interrogate a goose
Who can only cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle, cackle.

CURTAIN.

UNIVERSITY OF N.C. AT CHAPEL HILL
00027933229